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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ACTUAL AND PREFERRED
TASKS OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

by



PÉTER FRANCIS PROUT

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ACTUAL AND PREFERRED TASKS OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION, submitted by Peter Francis Prout in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Date *October 3, 1974*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the functions of Regional Offices of Education (ROE) as they relate to the execution of various tasks in the Province of Alberta. Particularly, the study was an attempt to investigate superintendents' perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by Regional Offices of Education in the Province of Alberta.

A Regional Office of Education was defined as an intermediate educational unit operating as an extension of the provincial Department of Education.

The population for the study was the 87 superintendents working in the Province of Alberta in March, 1974. Seventy-eight of these provided usable returns. Data for the study were collected by means of a questionnaire entitled "A Study of the Activities and Services of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education."

All respondents indicated that they had experienced some contact with ROE during the 1973-74 school year and that this contact was generally initiated by the respondents rather than ROE personnel. The majority of respondents reported that they had also felt reason to contact ROE staff for assistance and that they had actually requested help from ROE in solving problems encountered throughout the 1973-74 school year.

Respondents perceived regulatory and consultative functions to be major purposes for ROE staff initiated contact. The respondents

generally requested consultative services when they initiated contact with ROE personnel. Rural superintendents contacted ROE more frequently than did urban superintendents and they were generally satisfied with the services they received.

All respondents believed ROE to be effective agencies in helping them solve problems they faced.

The greatest advantage of ROE services as perceived by respondents was the general expertise of ROE staff in providing consultative assistance. Urban superintendents preferred to seek the services of personnel within the school system rather than ROE personnel.

Rural superintendents noted that the greatest disadvantage in seeking ROE services was that there were not enough ROE staff or that ROE were too far away.

Regional Offices were of benefit to urban superintendents because they were perceived by urban superintendents to perform regulatory functions. By contrast, rural superintendents perceived the consultative functions of ROE to be the greatest benefit to them.

All respondents reported that they preferred more involvement by ROE in all activity areas outlined in the study. These preferences did not differ significantly among the six zones of the province. Nor were there significant differences in these preferences between urban and rural superintendents or between separate and public school superintendents.

Overall respondents perceived more actual involvement by the Department of Education than by ROE in the task areas outlined in the study. Preferences for involvement between the Department of Education and ROE also favoured the former.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The trend towards restructuring organizations on a regional basis is a relatively recent innovation. Reference to this fact is made by Gillie (1967), Bird (1969), Tindal (1968) and Haviland (1965). Departments of Education appear to be part of this recent trend and the emergence of Regional Offices of Education in Canada is seen as an example. Regional Offices of Education have been established in eight Canadian provinces and the Northwest Territories. These provinces are Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland (Chapman and Ingram, 1974).

The chronological development and criteria for establishing Regional Offices of Education in Alberta began with the report of the Royal Commission on Education in Alberta in 1959. Reference to regional offices was made in the following three sections of the commission report.

180. That the province enter the service field of supervision through the provision of highly qualified and specialized regional consultants.

181. That the development of a regional system of specialized services be coordinated with the plan to transfer away from provincially appointed generalists, and include as required, more training or retraining of present field personnel.

182. That the immediate nucleus of each regional office include high school inspectors, specialist personnel in reading, English language, guidance, and superintendents required to inspect rural and small urban schools which are independent of division and counties (Royal Commission on Education in Alberta, 1959:308-309).

The Cameron Commission recommendations respecting regional offices were not acted upon until 1966 when five regional offices were set up at Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge (Alberta Education Memorandum, 1973).

In 1970 a sixth office was established at Athabasca to become operational for the 1971-72 school year. On July 1st, 1973, however, this office was closed and its five member staff was assigned to the Edmonton office. This was in response to a number of local school boards requesting that the office be re-located to Edmonton because of better communication with the city.

Regional Offices of Education in Alberta are extensions of the provincial Department of Education and were established with the dual purpose of decentralizing government services and equalizing services provided by the Department of Education between the rural and urban areas of the province (Alberta Education Memorandum: Field Services Branch, 1973). Specifically, Regional Office personnel provide consultative services to local school districts and they carry out regulatory functions on behalf of the Department of Education in Alberta. Programs and services are adapted to meet the specific educational needs of the region in which the office is located (Chapman, 1972).

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the functions of Regional Offices of Education (ROE) as they relate to the execution of various tasks in the Province of Alberta. Particularly the study was an attempt to determine superintendents' perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by Regional Offices of Education in the Province of Alberta.

Sub-problems

1. What is the extent of use made by superintendents of the Regional Offices of Education in Alberta?
2. What are the perceptions of superintendents concerning the specific advantages and overall benefits of the services offered by Regional Offices of Education in Alberta?
3. Do the perceptions of superintendents concerning the actual tasks and services provided by Regional Offices of Education in Alberta differ according to selected situational variables?
4. Do the perceptions of superintendents concerning the preferred tasks and services provided by Regional Offices of Education in Alberta differ according to selected situational variables?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Decentralization

In the present study the term 'decentralization' is being used

4

with reference to the amount of service being offered by the Department of Education in Alberta to rural school systems.

Regional Office of Education

A Regional Office of Education is defined in this study as an intermediate educational unit operating as an extension of the provincial Department of Education. As an intermediate unit the regional office is defined by Nault as:

. . . specifically established and designed to function between the state department and the local administrative unit, service both agencies (Nault, 1970:10).

In the Alberta context it is designed to function between the Alberta Department of Education and the various school districts, divisions and counties in the province.

ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that the items of the questionnaire which sought information from superintendents on the task areas of Regional Offices of Education and the task areas of the Central Department of Education were valid and reliable. To the extent that they are not valid and reliable, and to the extent that they are not representative of all the tasks performed by Regional Office personnel, these are major limitations of the study.

Delimitations

The present study was confined to the perceptions of superintendents concerning the actual and preferred task areas of Regional Offices of Education in Alberta.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

As with any innovation, the regional office possibly faces an insecure future until its clientele perceive that it provides them with useful service. Persistent attempts at evaluating the success of new ideas will always be made, particularly in education. The vulnerability of the regional office to criticism and opposition is very real according to Campbell (1970). He believes that:

. . . any unit which attempts to find a place between the legally fixed responsibility for education at the state level and the jealously guarded operation of schools at the local school district level is inevitably in trouble (Campbell, 1970:123).

Regional Offices may become even more susceptible to criticism if attempts are made to measure their effectiveness against their goals. The Department of Education has set broadly defined goals which can act as guidelines for Regional Offices of Education and Etzioni (1964) considers measuring achievement criteria of an organization against its goals to be a futile evaluation.

Since goals, as symbolic units, are ideals which are more attractive than the reality which the organization attains, the organization can almost always be reported to be a failure (Etzioni, 1964:16).

Chapman (1972) makes reference to the general acceptance of some form of intermediate educational unit being necessary to supply adequate programs and services, especially in small school districts, and to the need for an understanding of the nature and role of such an agency.

On the basis of the above cited information it was assumed

that an evaluation of regional offices would provide useful information which could act as a guideline for current tasks and for the future expansion of services offered by regional offices.

Secondly there is confusion and ambiguity in the philosophical and theoretical writings on intermediate units (regional offices) as these are described in the literature. Evidence of this is found in a memorandum by the Central Office of the Alberta Education Department issued in November, 1971.

. . . the present concept of the Regional Office does not seem to include a significant amount of decentralization although the actual situation is somewhat ambiguous (Alberta Education Memorandum, 1971).

Finally, a 1971 memorandum of the Field Services Branch of the Department of Education in Alberta states:

The total expectations held for the Regional Office determine its goals and functions and this results in the shaping of the organization to achieve the goals set for it. No two offices are exactly alike since needs vary from zone to zone (Alberta Education Memorandum: Field Services Branch, 1971:5).

It is anticipated that this study may help to indicate any differences in expectations that may be held for Regional Offices of Education among Alberta's school superintendents located in the various parts of the province.

OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

The remainder of the thesis is organized in the following manner:

Chapter two provides a review of the literature which includes a general overview of writings on Regional Offices, a rationale for Regional Offices of Education, functions of Regional Offices of

Education and the limitations of Regional Offices of Education in terms of the services they offer.

Chapter three describes the design of the study, the instrumentation, the population and method of data collection and analysis.

Chapters four and five present the findings of the study.

Chapter six includes a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications of the study and some suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In Chapter 1 an introduction to the study was presented, the problem was outlined, the terms were defined, and a brief justification for the study was given. The problem, briefly stated, was to evaluate the functions of Regional Offices of Education as they relate to the execution of various tasks in the Province of Alberta and to attempt to examine superintendents' perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by Regional Offices of Education in the Province of Alberta.

This chapter presents a review of writings that are pertinent to the problem under study. The literature is presented in four sections. The first section provides a general introduction to the Regional Office concept in Alberta. The remaining three sections deal with a rationale for regional offices, the functions performed by regional offices, and the limitations of regional offices in terms of the services they offer.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Since Regional Offices of Education have emerged in the organizational structure of provincial Departments of Education they have received only limited attention in education journals. Ontario and Quebec initiated the development of Regional Offices of Education in Canada in 1965 and 1966 and since that time other provinces ha

introduced Regional Offices to meet particular education needs.

Literature concerning Regional Offices of Education in Alberta is largely limited to memoranda between Education Department personnel and coordinators of the Regional Offices. These memoranda are generally statements of opinions by Regional Office personnel. They may also be directives to Regional Office personnel by Central Office staff of the Department of Education in Edmonton concerning the functions of the Regional Offices of Education.

Due to the fact that Regional Offices of Education have existed in Alberta for only a limited period of time, an evaluation to date has not been practical. The major body of the literature on Regional Offices, therefore, concerns descriptions of their structure and function.

RATIONALE FOR REGIONAL OFFICES

Gillie (1967) claims regional planning and development is part of the modern movement to manage community affairs in a more constructive, considered and far-sighted manner. Regional planning seeks to examine the region and its developmental problems as a whole. Furthermore, Tindal (1968) notes that the restructuring of organizations on a regional basis has been evident in both government and non-government areas for quite some time.

Other writers express views similar to those of Gillie and Tindal. Bird (1968) states that rural areas traditionally have been at a disadvantage financially compared to urban areas and that a heavy initial investment in a revised educational system, by attracting

better educators and new industry, would result in a constantly improving school system and a healthier local economy. Haviland (1965) draws attention to the complex needs of society demanding complex programs which the school district cannot afford. For this reason he believes cooperative regional provision of programs and services is becoming necessary.

These points were obviously noticeable in Alberta where:

It has been evident for some time that a serious imbalance existed between the educational leadership and supervisory services available to rural school jurisdictions and those available to urban school systems (Hawkesworth, 1971:1).

Individually any one of the above mentioned factors may well be considered sufficient justification for 'regionalism' in education. Chapman (1972) also makes reference to the inadequacies at the school district level and the limitations of provincial departments of education as further justifications for the existence of regional offices.

Finally a conference report in May, 1968, regarding four U.S. states indicated that trends in the development of Area Educational Service Agencies include 1) abandonment of the intermediate unit known as the county system of schools, 2) the creation of a new, larger and more serviceable intermediate organization, and 3) a distinct movement away from regulatory to service functions (Stephens and Spiess, 1968). These Area Educational Service Agencies (A.E.S.A. Units) seem to be similar in structure and function to Alberta's Regional Offices of Education.

Stephens and Spiess (1968) also believe the traditional intermediate unit must undergo pronounced changes in its structure and philosophy. They perceive agencies with similar functions to those

of regional offices which would be able to:

. . . plan comprehensive programs and services in response to the needs of local school districts, large and small within its constituency, and to attract qualified personnel to supplement these programs at a high level of competency (Stephens and Spiess, 1968:2-3).

In summary it seems that Regional Offices of Education have a definite role to play in the attempt by Departments of Education to meet the needs of a diverse and constantly changing society.

FUNCTIONS OF REGIONAL OFFICES

A perusal of the evidence outlined by Chapman (1972) indicates that a great diversity of expectations is held by client systems and administrators alike, for the functions of Regional Offices. Furthermore, the priority of goals for Regional Offices in specific areas is generally determined according to the needs of the particular area in which the Regional Office is located. This wide spectrum of needs possibly affects the status of Regional Offices according to the amount of service each Regional Office is able to provide.

In the U.S. the intermediate unit functions independently between the state education system and the local school district.

Structurally and functionally, the intermediate unit lies between the state on the one hand and the local district on the other. It is an arm of the state but occupies territory that encompasses many local school districts. It is charged by the state educational agency with certain educational responsibilities, but it provides services to the local district (Knezevich, 1962:141).

In Alberta, however, the regional office is an extension of the provincial Department of Education. The Regional Office of Education in Alberta was established as an attempt to decentralize government

services and to equalize services provided by the Department of Education to rural and urban areas of the province (Alberta Education Memorandum: Field Services Branch, 1973). The Regional Office performs regulatory functions and provides consultative services to local school districts. Programs and services are adapted to meet the specific educational needs of the region in which the office is located (Chapman, 1972).

Because of their short period of operation in Canada, Nault (1970) reports difficulty in being able to categorize specific functions of regional offices or their possible benefits and limitations.

The concept of regional offices for Alberta has been tied to the idea of improving the educational opportunities available to Alberta youth, especially those in rural areas and small urban centers. Furthermore, it was felt that because of rapid changes in many phases of education, new and significant services were necessary in order to maintain and upgrade the many aspects of public education at all levels, from Grades 1 through 12 (Alberta Education Memorandum, 1973).

In conclusion it would appear that the Regional Office of Education in Alberta acts as a vehicle of the Central Department of Education in an attempt to improve the educational system on a provincial basis.

LIMITATIONS OF REGIONAL OFFICES

Possibly the major hindrance to the smooth and effective functioning of regional offices is the divergent expectations which

are held for them. Reference to numerous and varied expectations for regional offices has already been made in this review. Regional Offices of Education are a relatively recent innovation in Alberta and this may partially explain why only limited services are offered at this time. Furthermore, Regional Offices are an innovation in the education system and Isenberg (1966) expresses concern that when one segment of the educational system is altered, all other levels are affected. Other writers appear to share this opinion.

Griffiths speaks of the organization (the system) as existing in an environment (the suprasystem) and having within it a subsystem (the administrative apparatus of the organization) (Owens, 1970:68).

In addition, it must be understood that the educational system has no physical structure. The educational system instead, is a structure of events and not a structure of physical parts. It is a structure which is inseparable from the functioning of the system.

Social systems are essentially contrived systems. They are made by men and are imperfect systems. Social systems are anchored in the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, motivations, habits, and expectations of human beings (Katz and Kahn, 1966:33).

An example of confusion and uncertainty within Alberta's Regional Offices of Education is seen in a study conducted by Holdaway (1972) who reported that Regional Office staff indicated that the most controversial aspect of their work concerned the apparent dilemma posed by the expectation of simultaneously performing the functions of consultation and evaluation.

SUMMARY

In this chapter a summary of literature pertinent to the present study was given. The literature review was presented in four sections. Section one was a general introduction which highlighted the fact that regional offices are a recent innovation in Alberta and that literature concerning evaluation of Regional Offices of Education in Alberta is limited.

Section two dealt with a rationale for regional offices and pointed out that 'regionalism' is part of a recent trend in managing community affairs and responding to the specific needs of all sections of the community.

The general functions of regional offices were investigated in section three, and the limitations of regional offices in the final section.

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Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The research design is described and presented in this chapter. Included is a discussion of the following: the instrumentation, the population, method of data collection, data transformation and analysis of the data.

INSTRUMENTATION

The data used in the present study were gathered as part of a major evaluative study of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education. This study was conducted by the Department of Educational Administration, The University of Alberta, for the Department of Education, Government of Alberta, in May, 1974.

As part of the present study a questionnaire was sent to all superintendents of schools in the Province of Alberta.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) contained 77 items which required the respondents to give information on their general perceptions of the Regional Offices of Education in Alberta, their perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by Regional Offices of Education in Alberta and their perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by the Central Department of Education.

Part 'A' of the questionnaire (9 items) was designed to serve two purposes. The first purpose was to investigate the use made of

the Regional Offices of Education by Alberta's school superintendents. The second purpose was to investigate the perceptions of superintendents concerning the advantages of the services offered by Regional Offices of Education over services offered by central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties within the province.

Part 'B' of the questionnaire (39 items, including an addendum), was designed specifically to determine the perceptions of superintendents regarding the actual and preferred task areas performed by Regional Offices of Education in Alberta.

Part 'C' of the questionnaire (29 items), was designed specifically to determine the perceptions of superintendents regarding the actual and preferred task areas performed by the Central Department of Education in Alberta. Provision was also made in the questionnaire for any additional comments by respondents.

The items included in parts B and C of the questionnaire were grouped under six categories according to the "facts of organizational functioning" as outlined by Katz and Kahn (1966:39-42). The 'systems analysis' approach was used in constructing these sections of the questionnaire in order that various items could be placed under specific 'task areas' or 'categories.' This approach enabled the researcher to examine many specific activities or services of the Regional Offices of Education under a few broad categories. The organization being studied was analysed according to its constituent parts or functions.

According to Sergiovanni and Carver systems analysis is:

. . . an attempt to carefully define and map each of the interdependent parts of the whole so that one part can be manipulated with full awareness of the effects on each of the other parts internal to the system and the effects of this system on its environment (1973:215).

Katz and Kahn (1966) claim all organizations have five major subsystems, each with a set of specified functions and relationships. The function of the "production subsystem" is to perform the goal directed tasks of the organization. The "maintenance subsystem" mediates between the task demands of the organization and the human needs of its members. Its goal is to maintain the system in a steady state. The "boundary subsystem" has two major functions - to obtain the necessary resource inputs from the system's environment and to obtain the necessary social support and legitimation from its environment. The "adaptive subsystem" is concerned with research development and planning.

The "managerial subsystem" is responsible for exercising control within the organization (resolving conflicts between subsystems and between hierarchial levels within sub-systems), coordinating the functions of the organization, and coordinating resource inputs and external relationships.

These basic subsystems outlined by Katz and Kahn have been used as a model for constructing six categories of activities performed by Alberta's Regional Offices of Education.

1. Technical-Productive Activities Related to Instruction

Items listed under this category were designed to determine who is responsible for the work which is associated with the instructional process.

2. Support Activities Related to Procuring Resources and Determining How These Are Used

Items in this category were designed to measure attitudes toward procuring and allocating resources and to determine how these were to be used in the educational process.

3. Maintenance Activities Related to Staffing and Upgrading of School District Personnel

The intended purpose of items in this category was to determine priorities in recruiting, training and socializing personnel.

4. Reward and Sanctioning Activities

Recognition and achievement were perceived to be the two most important factors being measured in this category.

5. Adaptive Activities Related to Need for Change and Innovation

The survival of an organization in a changing environment is paramount in this category and items were designed to find out who is responsible for innovation, research and planning.

6. Managerial Activities Related to Coordination, Control and Direction Within and Among School Districts, Divisions and Counties

This final category was included in an attempt to determine who was responsible for "the organized activities for controlling, coordinating and directing the many subsystems of the structure."

A draft questionnaire was submitted to representatives of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), the Alberta School Trustees Association (ASTA), Field Services Personnel from the Department of

Education and school superintendents. A pilot test was also carried out with teachers and principals. Recommendations for the revision and improvement of the questionnaire were incorporated before it was printed in its final form.

THE POPULATION

The population included all school superintendents working in the Province of Alberta in May, 1974. Of the 87 superintendents in the population, 80 responded to the questionnaire. The percentage return of questionnaires by respondents is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES

Total Number of Superintendents	Number of Returns	Number Not Returned	Percentage Return
87	80	7	91.96%

In Table 3.2 a more detailed analysis of the population is presented. Respondents are categorized by zone, county, school division, school district and Roman Catholic separate school district.

Table 3.2
THE POPULATION

Total Number of Respondents = 80					
Zone	County	School Division	School District	R.C. Separate School District	Total
1	2	6	2	1	11
2 & 3	14	3	7	5	29
4	6	3	2	1	12
5	2	7	2	1	12
6	5	6	2	3	16
Total	29	25	15	11	80

(The term "zone" is used synonymously by the Alberta Department of Education to signify a geographic area of the province).

Both tables presented above indicate that the total number of respondents was 80. Two of these respondents, however, did not return completed questionnaires but sent letters of explanation instead. One of these two superintendents replied that he would rather not complete the questionnaire and the other superintendent said he was unable to complete the questionnaire because his school district had had no contact to date with the Alberta Regional Office of Education located in his region of the province.

The total number of respondents for purposes of data analysis was, therefore, 78.

DATA COLLECTION

In March 1974, the questionnaire "A Study of the Activities and Services of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education" was mailed

individually to all school superintendents working in the Province of Alberta. A letter (see Appendix B) explaining the reasons for the study was enclosed with the questionnaire along with a return addressed envelope.

On May 9, 1974 a second letter (see Appendix C) was sent to any superintendent who had not yet returned his questionnaire. The final date for returning questionnaires was May 24, 1974. As indicated above the total number of responses by that date was 80.

DATA TRANSFORMATION

Data from Part 'A' of the questionnaire were coded according to the number which were provided beforehand in the questionnaire or according to categories which were later constructed for the analysis of the 'open response' questions. Data in Parts 'B and C' of the questionnaire were coded according to the number which was checked in the space provided beside each item.

Additional comments which were written in by respondents who added items to Parts 'B or C' were coded separately. All data were transferred onto standard data coding sheets and the information then punched onto I.B.M. computer cards.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Situational Variables

The data were examined according to the following classifications:

1. Superintendents whose jurisdiction included the Separate and Public School Districts of Calgary, Edmonton, Camrose, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Grande Prairie (In the present study

these superintendents will be referred to as 'urban');

2. Superintendents whose jurisdiction included all areas within the Province of Alberta with the exception of those listed above (in the present study these superintendents will be referred to as 'rural');

3. Superintendents working within the Separate School System;

4. Superintendents working within the Public School System;

5. Superintendents from each of the five regions within the Province of Alberta. These regions were: Grande Prairie, Edmonton (administrative zones 2 and 3), Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge.

Treatment of the Data

All responses in Part 'A' of the questionnaire were analyzed by using frequency and percentage frequency distributions. Where open-ended questions were involved, responses were first categorized and then frequencies determined.

Analysis of variance was used to determine the significance of the difference between means for correlated samples as proposed by Ferguson (1959:153-155). The response categories "full responsibility," "shared responsibility," "advice and consultation," and "no involvement" were treated as though they formed a continuous variable. Wherever the fifth response category "don't know or undecided" was checked by the respondent the item was left out of the analysis.

Mean scores were calculated for the actual and preferred responses to each item. These scores were then tested for significant differences. Three levels of probability, .05, .01 and .001, are reported.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the design of the study is outlined. Included is a description of the instrument used, a description of the sample and a discussion of the method of data collection and analysis.

A questionnaire which contained 77 items was constructed for the study. The questionnaire was sent to all Alberta's school superintendents (N=87), and 78 returned usable data. Analysis of variance was used in data analysis and three levels of probability, .05, .01 and .001, are reported.

Chapter 4

SUPERINTENDENTS' OPINIONS OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

This chapter presents information on the type and extent of contact which superintendents have had with Regional Offices of Education, the amount of use superintendents have made of Regional Office services, superintendents' perceptions of the advantages, disadvantages and overall benefits of Regional Offices of Education and superintendents' perceptions of the actual and preferred activities of Regional Offices of Education.

In subsequent references to Regional Offices of Education, the abbreviation ROE will be used. In addition, the term "respondents" will be used in various instances as a description for the 78 superintendents who returned completed questionnaires.

EXTENT OF USE MADE OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

Degree of Contact with Regional Offices of Education

The following analyses present information on the extent of contact which respondents have had with ROE and on the extent of use of the services offered by ROE.

Findings. A perusal of Table 4.1, specifically the information on item two, indicates that all the respondents reported having had some contact with ROE.

Table 4.1

Extent of the Use Made by Superintendents of Regional Offices of Education

Item	Superintendent Responses							
	None	Once or twice	3 to 5 times	6 to 10 times	11 to 20 times	Over 20 times	No response	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. How many times during the 1973-74 school year have you felt that you needed assistance which the Regional Office of Education in your area might have provided?	2.6	7.7	25.6	30.8	20.5	11.5	1.3	100.0
2. How many times have you personally had contact with Regional Office personnel during the 1973-74 school year?	-	5.1	17.9	33.3	26.9	16.7	-	100.0
3. How many times was this contact initiated by the Regional Office rather than by you?	14.1	37.1	32.1	9.0	5.1	1.3	1.3	100.0
4. How many times during the 1973-74 school year have you attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office of Education or one of its staff members?	3.8	12.8	29.5	33.4	12.8	7.7	-	100.0

The summary of responses to item 1 indicates that twenty-five percent of respondents reported a need for assistance from a ROE "3 to 5 times," thirty percent reported they needed assistance "6 to 10 times" and twenty percent of the respondents reported they needed assistance "11 to 20 times" during the 1973-74 school year.

A total of seventy-five percent of respondents reported that they needed assistance from a ROE between 3 and 20 times during the 1973-74 school year. The data also show that only three percent of the respondents felt no need for ROE assistance.

The summary of responses to item 3 as shown in Table 4.1 indicates that some of the contacts were initiated by ROE personnel. Fifteen percent of the respondents claimed that contact was initiated by ROE personnel six times or more during the year. However, fourteen percent of respondents also stated that ROE personnel never initiated a contact with them during the 1973-74 school year. The balance of the respondents claimed that such contact was initiated by ROE staff less than six times.

The final item shown in Table 4.1 concerns the number of times respondents attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office during the 1973-74 school year. Once again the majority of respondents (almost 63%) checked between "3 and 10 times." Another twelve percent checked "once or twice" and twelve percent also checked "11 to 20 times."

Discussion. The results gleaned from the four items in Table 4.1 suggest that respondents have had a substantial amount of exposure to ROE. All respondents reported that they have had some contact with

ROE and almost all felt they needed ROE assistance.

Furthermore it appears from the distributions of responses to items 3 and 4 that a greater percentage of the contacts made with ROE were client initiated rather than ROE initiated.

Finally, it is evident from the data that the felt need for assistance was generally followed up by actually contacting ROE. This assumption is based on the high degree of association apparent in the data between the number of times respondents felt a need for assistance and the number of times they actually attempted to obtain assistance.

Urban and Rural Superintendents' Contacts With Regional Offices of Education

An analysis was also carried out to investigate possible differences between the perceptions of urban and rural respondents in the amount of contact and the use they may have made of services offered by ROE.

Findings. Analyses of variance demonstrated no statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence for urban and rural respondents in their contact with and use of ROE.

Discussion. It would appear that urban and rural superintendents do not differ in their overall perceptions concerning the items listed in Table 4.2.

Contact Initiated by Regional Office of Education Personnel

Respondents were invited to report their perceptions concerning reasons for ROE staff initiating contact with them. The responses to this open question were classified under seven headings.

Table 4.2
Extent of Use Made by Urban and Rural Superintendents of Regional Offices of Education

Item	Superintendents		Level of Significance
	Urban N = 12 Mean*	Rural N = 66 Mean	
1. How many times have you felt that you needed assistance from a Regional Office?	3.42	4.05	NS
2. How many times have you personally had contact with Regional Offices?	4.25	4.33	NS
3. How many times was the contact initiated by the Regional Office?	2.67	2.55	NS
4. How many times have you attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office of Education?	3.33	3.67	NS
5. Have Regional Office services assisted you in the solution of problems?	1.45	1.61	NS
6. Do you see any advantages in seeking the services of Regional Office staff?	1.27	1.26	NS

* Mean scores were compiled from the following: 1 = none; 2 = once or twice; 3 = 3 to 5 times; 4 = 6 to 10 times; 5 = 11 to 20 times; 6 = over 20 times.

Findings. Although there is a marked difference between the number of urban and the number of rural superintendents in the study it can be seen in Table 4.3 that the average number of purposes for the ROE initiated contacts listed by urban and rural superintendents was much the same (1.42 and 1.18 respectively).

Urban superintendents' responses regarding the purpose of Regional Office staff initiating contact with them reveal their perception that "consultative assistance and general information" was the most important reason for such contact.

The rural superintendents gave this reason less frequent mention on the average and mentioned "carrying out regulatory functions on behalf of the Department of Education" as the main reason for Regional Office personnel contacting them.

Both groups of respondents note that approximately ten percent of ROE initiated contact was in order to assist in curriculum and program matters and that eleven percent of contact was to request help in evaluation.

The respondents differ in their perceptions for other items given in Table 4.3, however. More urban superintendents than rural superintendents reported items 1 and 3 as reasons for ROE initiated contact. This trend is reversed for items 2, 5 and 7, where more rural superintendents than urban superintendents reported these items as reasons for ROE initiated contact.

Table 4.3

Purposes of Contacts Initiated by Regional Office Staff*

Purpose of Contacts	Number of Respondents per item		Percentages of Respondents per item	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1. To provide consultative assistance and general information (e.g. about ROE services, EOF, etc.)	9	22	52.8	28.2
2. To carry out regulatory functions of the Department of Education (e.g. monitoring EOF)	2	24	11.8	30.7
3. To carry out inservice work	2	4	11.8	5.1
4. To provide assistance in curriculum and program matters.	2	8	11.8	10.3
5. To act on requests or complaints of teachers, parents or Department of Education officials.	-	8	-	10.3
6. To evaluate school systems, schools or school programs.	2	9	11.8	11.5
7. No apparent purpose, OR, cannot recall	-	3	-	3.9
Total number of respondents	17	78	100.0	100.0
Average number of responses	1.42	1.18		

* The item read: "Indicate the purpose(s) of the contact(s) which was(were) initiated by the Regional Office staff."

Discussion. Not all respondents supplied information for this particular item. It is noteworthy, however, that approximately eighty-six percent of respondents who did reply listed consultative and regulatory functions as the main reasons for Regional Office initiated contact.

These data tend to partially support the job description which has been tentatively prescribed for ROE by the Alberta Department of Education. The priority of functions suggested by the Department of Education for ROE are service, regulatory and developmental functions (Alberta Education: Memorandum, 1973). The service role is concerned with evaluation and inspection, the regulatory role is concerned with carrying out departmental regulations and procedures and the developmental role is concerned with consultation and assistance.

According to the results shown in Table 4.3 the developmental and regulatory functions were seen as more prominent by respondents than the service function which was ranked first in priority by the Department of Education when it set out its priorities for ROE.

Contact Initiated by Superintendents

Provision was also made for respondents to nominate reasons for their attempts to obtain assistance from ROE. The reactions to this question were also categorized into eight areas and the result of each attempt to obtain assistance was rated according to; "satisfactory result," "not completely satisfied" and "unsatisfactory result."

Findings. On the average considerably more rural superintendents attempted to obtain assistance from ROE than did urban superintendents. Data also suggest that the majority of rural superintendents (86%) were satisfied with the services they sought. Thirteen percent were not satisfied. Most dissatisfaction with service according to rural superintendents was in the area of program development and general information.

Both urban and rural respondents prioritized program development and general administrative information as areas where assistance was sought. Consultative and evaluative services were also nominated by urban and rural superintendents as other popular areas where assistance was requested.

Discussion. The results in Table 4.4 highlight consultation as easily the most demanded service of ROE by all respondents.

Again a role ambiguity in terms of job description for ROE and clientele expectations is disclosed. Consultation is considered by the Department of Education as being the least important function of ROE whereas respondents in the present study indicated consultation and general information as two areas of importance where assistance was requested.

These findings do concur with those of Chapman (1972), however, who states that ROE staff consider the provision of consultative service to be their major objective.

Table 4.4

Purpose and Results of Attempts to Obtain Assistance
From a Regional Office of Education*

	Number of Respondents Per Item						Percentage of Respondents Per Item (%)					
	Urban N=12			Rural N=66			Urban N=12			Rural N=66		
	S	I	U**	S	I	U	S	I	U	S	I	U
1. Requested consultative service	2	-	-	20	2	1	9.5	-	-	13.8	1.4	0.7
2. Requested help from Regional Office staff as resource personnel (e.g., providing information and help to teachers)	1	-	-	16	1	2	4.8	-	-	11.0	0.7	1.4
3. Requested assistance with inservice programs	2	-	-	17	-	-	9.5	-	-	11.7	-	-
4. Requested assistance in program development	3	1	-	22	4	2	14.3	4.8	-	15.2	2.7	1.3
5. Requested advice in purchasing equipment	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	2.1	-	0.7
6. Requested general information of an administrative nature	5	2	-	21	4	1	23.8	9.5	-	14.5	2.8	0.7
7. Requested evaluation of school facilities and school programs	3	-	-	18	1	-	14.3	-	-	12.4	0.7	-
8. Requested evaluation of school professional personnel	2	-	-	8	1	-	9.5	-	-	5.5	0.7	-
Overall satisfaction with assistance	18	3	-	125	13	7	85.7	14.3	-	86.2	9.0	4.8
Total number of attempts to gain assistance	21			145			100.0			100.0		
Average number of attempts to gain assistance	1.75			2.20								

* The item read: "If you have attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office, in what connection was this, and what was the result? Why assistance sought; result:"

** S = satisfactory result; I = not completely satisfied; U = unsatisfactory result.

It is also notable that respondents requested that ROE personnel assume the task of evaluation thus avoiding the regulatory role themselves. This factor alone could possibly contribute to the consultation/evaluation role conflict which Holdaway (1972) reported as a dilemma faced by ROE staff.

Regional Office Effectiveness

Respondents' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of ROE services in assisting with the solution of problems faced during the 1973-74 school year were collated. The category "qualified yes" hopefully accounts for ambivalence where respondents may not have readily checked the affirmative in general terms but would have also been reticent to check a definite "no."

Findings. A perusal of Table 4.5 immediately exhibits a highly positive attitude on behalf of the respondents toward the effectiveness of ROE in helping to solve problems.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents claimed ROE assisted them in solving problems, six percent claimed ROE did not assist them in solving problems and five percent were unable to comment.

Discussion. The data presented in Table 4.5 appear to complement preceding discussion. It has already been reported in this chapter that respondent's contact with ROE and their satisfaction with services provided by ROE was relatively high. When asked to generalize about the services of ROE, respondents again indicated satisfaction with results.

Table 4.5
Assistance of Regional Offices of Education in Solution of Problems

Item	Yes	Qualified Yes	No	Unable to Comment	Total
	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z
1. In general, have Regional Office services assisted you in the solution of problems you have faced during the 1973-74 school year?	55.2	33.3	6.4	5.1	100.0

SERVICES OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

A shift in emphasis is taken at this point from contact with ROE and use of ROE to the advantages and disadvantages in seeking ROE services.

Analysis of Regional Office Services

An attempt was made to measure respondents' perceptions regarding the advantages in seeking the services of ROE staff rather than using central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties.

Findings. Sixty-seven percent of respondents reported that they saw advantages in using services provided by ROE staff, rather than services offered by central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties. Twenty percent saw no such advantage and twelve percent were unable to comment.

Discussion. Reference back to Table 4.5 points to a fairly strong similarity between the data in that table and the data in Table 4.6.

As evident in Table 4.6, sixty-seven percent of respondents reported that they saw advantages in seeking ROE services whereas Table 4.5 reveals that eighty-eight percent of respondents were generally satisfied with the assistance provided by ROE in the solution of problems. In the light of the information presented in the earlier table the results in Table 4.6 are not surprising. If

Table 4.6

Services Offered by Regional Offices of Education

	Superintendent Responses N = 78			
	Yes	No	Unable to Comment	Total
	%	%	%	%
1. Do you see any advantages in seeking the services of Regional Office staff rather than using central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties?	66.7	20.5	12.8	100.0

respondents have had positive assistance it is assumed that they would perceive advantages in seeking help from ROE as the source of assistance.

The fact that other categories in both tables do not highly correspond is probably due to the fact that the category "qualified yes" in Table 4.5 holds a considerable percentage of responses. The twenty percent of respondents in Table 4.6 who do not perceive advantages in seeking ROE services over services offered by central office staff, however, are a sizeable representation of the total group. These respondents may believe the services offered by ROE staff are not superior to services offered by central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties.

Advantages in Seeking Regional Office Services

Respondents were asked to list advantages which they perceived in seeking ROE services rather than services offered by central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties. These are compiled in Table 4.7.

Findings. Almost one advantage per person was given by the urban and rural superintendents in the study.

Table 4.7 indicates that more than eighty percent of urban superintendents and eighty percent of rural superintendents believed the general expertise of ROE personnel to be the greatest advantage in seeking ROE services over the services offered by central office personnel. These percentages are gained by adding the responses to items 1, 3 and 4 which allude to the expertise of ROE personnel. Some

Table 4.7
Advantages in Seeking Regional Office Services

Advantages	Number of Respondents Per Item		Percentages of Respondents Per Item (%)	
	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66
1. A general expertise available over a broad area	6	9	54.5	30.7
2. Greater access to Department of Education information and procedures	2	8	18.2	12.9
3. A general expertise beyond small school jurisdictions, OR, no central office staff	3	24	27.3	38.7
4. More expertise and time available	-	9	-	14.5
5. Less cost to school systems	-	2	-	3.2
Total number of respondents perceiving advantages	11	62	100.0	100.0
Average number of perceived advantages	0.92	0.94	91.66	93.93

members of both groups also saw ROE as an information source on Department of Education matters.

Discussion. According to data in Table 4.7 the most distinct advantage perceived by respondents in seeking ROE services over services offered by central office staff, is in the expertise available within ROE. The responses to this item were of a general nature and respondents did not supply information in specific detail.

Disadvantages in Seeking Regional
Office Services

Provision was also made for respondents to report the disadvantages of ROE services over services offered by central office staff.

Findings. As indicated in Table 4.8, one-half of the urban superintendents in the study mentioned disadvantages in pursuing ROE services over services offered by central office staff, compared with slightly less than half of the rural superintendents who mentioned such disadvantages.

Fifty percent of the urban superintendents who reacted to the item claimed there is more expertise within the school system than with ROE. Thirty-three percent claimed the ROE staff are not conversant with area problems and sixteen percent claimed they would prefer to use central office staff employed by school districts, division or counties.

Forty percent of the rural superintendents who reacted to the item claimed that the greatest disadvantage in seeking ROE services

Table 4.8
Disadvantages in Seeking Regional Office Services

Disadvantages	Number of Respondents Per Item		Percentages of Respondents Per Item (%)	
	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66
1. Not enough Regional Office staff, OR, Regional Office staff too far away	-	11	-	40.8
2. Regional Office staff are not conversant with area problems	2	4	33.3	14.8
3. More expertise within the school system	3	3	50.0	11.1
4. Prefer to use central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties	1	8	16.2	29.6
5. Regional Office has a bias toward Department of Education philosophy	-	1	-	3.7
Total number of respondents perceiving disadvantages	6	27	100.0	100.0
Average number of perceived disadvantages	0.50	0.41	50.0	40.90

over the services offered by central office staff that there were not enough ROE staff or that ROE were too far away. Fourteen percent stated that ROE staff were not conversant with area problems, eleven percent claimed there was more expertise within the school system and twenty-nine percent stated that they would prefer to use central office staff employed by school districts, division or counties.

Discussion. Probably the most conspicuous result shown in Table 4.8 is that far fewer respondents listed disadvantages than had earlier listed advantages as indicated in the previous table.

A second interesting fact is that fifty percent of the urban superintendents who responded to this item believed that there was more expertise within the school system compared with only ten percent of the rural superintendents who made this claim. Another thirty-three percent of urban superintendents claimed ROE were not conversant with area problems.

The largest single group of rural complainants, however, alleged that there were not enough ROE staff or that ROE were too far away. It appears that some rural superintendents perceived the disadvantages of seeking ROE services over services offered by central office staff in terms of accessibility of the ROE and ROE staff. A number of urban superintendents who possibly found the ROE and ROE staff more accessible than rural superintendents, however, indicated a preference for seeking the services provided within the school system rather than services offered by ROE personnel.

Benefits of Regional Offices in Education

Another slight shift in emphasis was taken in the data gathering instrument in order to solicit the opinions of respondents in relation to the overall benefits which they considered had resulted from the work of ROE in specific school districts, divisions and counties.

Findings. Nine categories of responses were constructed in the attempt to classify all the responses furnished. As Table 4.9 indicates, respondents averaged more than one benefit per individual.

As responses to items 3, 4 and 5 reveal, a total of fifty-three percent of urban superintendents who answered this item viewed the ROE as a vehicle of the Department of Education and saw this as the greatest benefit to them of ROE activities. A further fifteen percent saw minimal or no benefits, ten percent believed the provision of evaluative and consultative services to be a positive benefit of ROE efforts and ten percent perceived ROE's to be resource centres.

Twenty-six percent of rural superintendents who answered this item believed the most beneficial aspect of ROE to be that it acted as a resource centre for all aspects of program development, inservice programs and service to teachers. Seventeen percent perceived the benefit to be the general expertise of ROE personnel; fourteen percent valued the provision of evaluative and consultative service and fourteen percent saw minimal or no benefits. Eleven percent of rural superintendents also believed that the availability and expertise of

Table 4.9

**Overall Benefits Derived from the Work
of Regional Offices of Education***

	Number of Respondents Per Item		Percentage of Respondents Per Item (%)	
	Urban N=12	Rural N=66	Urban N=12	Rural N=66
1. Provision of evaluative and consultative service	2	13	10.4	14.9
2. General expertise of Regional Office personnel	1	15	5.3	17.2
3. Dissemination and coordination of regional and Department of Education general information	4	4	21.2	4.6
4. A general information source on Department of Education regulations, philosophies, etc.	4	7	21.2	8.1
5. A representative body to, and on behalf of, the Department of Education	2	1	10.5	1.2
6. Resource center for all aspects of program development, inservice programs and service to teachers	2	23	10.4	26.4
7. The availability and expertise of Regional Office staff reduces personnel costs for local school systems	1		5.3	11.5
8. Minimal or none	3	13	15.7	14.9
9. Don't know	-	1	-	1.2
Total numbers of respondents perceiving benefits	19	87	100.0	100.0
Average number of perceived benefits	1.59	1.32		

* The item read: "What overall benefits do you feel have resulted from the work of the Regional Offices of Education in your district, division or county?"

ROE staff reduces personnel costs for local school systems. They considered this factor to be another benefit of ROE presence.

Discussion. The regulatory role of ROE was seen by urban superintendents as the greatest benefit to them whereas rural superintendents placed more emphasis on the developmental role of ROE. This result is consistent with earlier findings reported in the study.

These results may not be surprising, however, when the possibility is considered that urban superintendents probably have access to a more diversified range of specialized help in programming and instructional areas than do rural superintendents. This supposition seems to be strengthened by the fact that thirty-two percent of rural superintendents listed consultation and general assistance as benefits resulting from ROE activities compared with the fifteen percent of urban superintendents who made this claim.

ACTUAL AND PREFERRED TASKS OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

The final section of this chapter represents another shift in emphasis. The initial stress in the chapter was on the amount of contact respondents had with ROE and the use made by respondents of ROE services. The second section reported on the advantages, disadvantages and benefits respondents saw as a result of the activities of ROE.

This section of the study is concerned with respondents' perceptions of the actual and preferred functions of ROE as they relate to the execution of various tasks within the Province of Alberta.

Major Activities and Services of Regional
Offices of Education

By way of introduction a general view of respondents' perceptions of the most important activities and services offered by ROE is presented. This is followed by a more detailed analysis.

Findings. Table 4.10 presents a list of the top ten of a total of 39 "actual" activities of ROE as considered by all superintendents and also a list of the top ten of a total of 39 "preferred" activities of ROE. This table was compiled by ranking mean scores for all items in each of the six categories according to what respondents believe ROE are doing (actual) and what ROE should be doing (preferred). The closer the mean of an item was to 1.0 (Full Responsibility of ROE), the higher the ranking that item received.

Mean scores for each item were computed from the following:

1 = Full responsibility of ROE; 2 = Shared responsibility of ROE and other organization(s); 3 = Advice and Consultation by ROE; 4 = No involvement by ROE.

Four of the top ten items which are shown in the table were classified in the questionnaire as "Technical-Productive" activities, four items were classified as "Reward and sanctioning" activities and one item each were from the "Support" activities and "Maintenance" activities categories.

Rankings by respondents for actual and preferred involvement by ROE are provided for each item. The degree of agreement between what respondents believe ROE are doing and what ROE should be doing

Table 4.10
Top Ten Activities and Services of Regional Offices of Education

Actual Ranking by Supts. N = 78	Item No.	Activities Category to which Item Belongs	Wording of Item	Preferred Ranking by Supts. N = 78	Agreement Between Actual and Preferred
1	6	Technical Productive	Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	1	EH*
2	20	Reward and Sanctioning	Evaluating individual school	3	VH
3	13	Support	Providing consultative services to individual teachers	7	VH
4	21	Reward and Sanctioning	Evaluating instructional programs in several schools	2	VH
5	15	Maintenance	Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	5	EH
6	19	Reward and Sanctioning	Evaluating an entire school system	4	VH
7	3	Technical Productive	Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	13.5	H
8	1	Technical Productive	Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within the Province	6	VH
9	2	Technical Productive	Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	9	EH
10	24	Reward and Sanctioning	Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	8	VH

* Key based on differences between rankings as follows:

EH = extremely high agreement (no difference in rankings);

VH = very high agreement (1 to 5 points difference);

H = high agreement (6 to 10 points difference).

is also provided. Where there was no difference between what respondents thought ROE were doing (actual ranking) and what they thought ROE should be doing (preferred ranking), the agreement was rated "extremely high." If there was a difference of one to five points between rankings the agreement was rated "very high" and a difference of six to ten points between rankings was rated "high."

The results in Table 4.10 indicate a high consensus by respondents regarding the actual and preferred involvement of ROE in relation to the ten activities which are shown. The only item which does not have a preferred ranking of ten or less is item number 3, "selecting textbooks and other instructional materials." The consensus for all other items is notably high.

Discussion. It is suggested that the top ten items which have been ranked refer almost exclusively to the regulatory role of ROE. These results are at variance with the findings of Chapman (1972:66) who reported that ROE personnel consider the provision of consultative services (developmental role) to be a major function of ROE.

Because of the tenuous distinction in defining the activities within the regulatory, service and developmental roles of ROE it is difficult to make comparisons with other research and literature, however.

Preferences for Regional Office Involvement in the Six Activity Categories

The following data were analysed in an attempt to determine the preferences by respondents for the extent of involvement by ROE in all thirty-nine activities which were included in the questionnaire.

These activities have been grouped into six categories. The categories are: 1) Technical-Productive activities related to instruction; 2) Support activities related to procuring resources and determining how these are used; 3) Maintenance activities related to staffing and upgrading of school district personnel; 4) Reward and Sanctioning activities; 5) Managerial activities related to coordination, control and direction within and among school districts, divisions and counties; 6) Adaptive activities related to change and innovation.

Mean scores for the actual and preferred degrees of involvement for each individual item within these categories were calculated. Analyses of variance between actual and preferred scores were then computed and significant differences beyond the .05, .01 and .001 level were noted.

A coding system was devised so that an indication of the direction and extent of difference between actual and preferred involvement could be given. This coding system is interpreted as follows:

- i = prefer slightly increased involvement;
- I = prefer moderately increased involvement;
- SI = prefer substantially increased involvement.

Findings. Data presented in Table 4.11 through to Table 4.16 inclusive indicate that when all superintendents were taken together (last column in each table) there was a preference for no change in involvement by ROE for only two of the 39 items represented. These were Item 3, Table 4.11 and Item 31, Table 4.15. For every other item in all six categories the 78 respondents indicated a preference for

Table 4.11

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Technical-Productive Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
1. Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within their Region	i*	SI	SI
2. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	i	I	SI
3. Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	I	n	n
4. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children	n	SI	SI
5. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children	i	SI	SI
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	n	I	SI
7. Determining types of student assignments	n	i	i
Overall for Items 1 - 7	i	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task area mentioned:

- i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);
- I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);
- SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);
- n = prefer no change in involvement;
- d = prefer decreased involvement (Beyond .05 level).

Table 4.12

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Support Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
8. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties	n*	I	SI
9. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance	n	SI	SI
10. Providing programs and services for exceptional children	n	SI	SI
11. Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services	n	SI	SI
12. Providing adult education programs and classes	n	SI	SI
13. Providing consultative services to individual teachers	i	i	i
Overall for Items 8 - 13	i	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task area mentioned:

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement.

Table 4.13

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Maintenance Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
14. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops	n*	SI	SI
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	n	SI	SI
16. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties	n	SI	SI
17. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff	1	SI	SI
18. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees	1	SI	SI
Overall for Items 14 - 18	1	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task areas mentioned:

- i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);
- I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);
- SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);
- n = prefer no change in involvement.

Table 4.14

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Reward and Sanctioning Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
19. Evaluating an entire school system	i*	I	SI
20. Evaluating individual schools	n	I	I
21. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools (e.g., Jr. High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Jr. High Schools)	n	SI	SI
22. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff	n	SI	SI
23. Evaluating student achievement	i	SI	SI
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	n	SI	SI
25. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties	n	SI	SI
26. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties	n	I	SI
27. Implementing regulations concerning plébiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations	n	I	I
Overall for Items 19 - 27	I	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task area mentioned:

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement.

Table 4.15

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Activities
Related to Coordination, Control and Direction

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
28. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools	n*	SI	SI
29. Arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system	1	SI	SI
30. Informing the Department of Education of the Provinces regarding school district, division or county needs	n	SI	SI
31. Collecting information from school districts, divisions and counties for transmission to the Department of Education	n	n	n
32. Assisting school district personnel and associated agencies like the ATA, ASTA, in all areas of administration related to education	n	SI	SI
33. Coordinating other provincial and local government services, e.g., recreation, culture and health	n	SI	SI
Overall for Items 28 - 33	1	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task area mentioned:

1 = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement.

Table 4.16

Involvement by Regional Offices of Education in Adaptive Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
34. Introducing new courses of study and curricula	i*	i	i
35. Introducing new teaching methods	i	SI	SI
36. Introducing new approaches to finance and business management	i	SI	SI
37. Determining the priorities for educational research	i	SI	SI
38. Conducting surveys and educational studies	i	SI	SI
39. Engaging in long-range planning	n	i	i
Overall for Items 34 - 39	i	SI	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task area mentioned:

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Beyond .001 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement.

more involvement by ROE. This preference for more involvement generally fell in the category "prefer substantially increased involvement."

When data were analysed separately for urban and rural superintendents' responses several differences between the two respondent groups were evident.

Tables 4.11 to 4.16 reveal that urban superintendents generally indicated either a preference for only slightly increased involvement by ROE or, more commonly, a preference for no change in involvement by ROE. The exceptions to this overall pattern are item 3 in Table 4.11 and items 37 and 39 in Table 4.16 where moderately increased involvement was preferred.

The preferences of rural superintendents were similar to the preferences of the total group of 78 respondents. The rural superintendents preferred no change in involvement for the same two items as the total group and indicated a preference for increased involvement in all other areas. The number of task areas for which rural superintendents desired increased ROE involvement was much higher than was the number for which urban superintendents desired increased involvement.

A summary of respondents' preferences for each category was also compiled. The data were taken from the bottom line of Table 4.11 through to Table 4.16 inclusive and represent the overall preferences by respondents for all items combined in each of the six categories. These data are pictorially presented in Figure 1.

The data in Figure 1 highlight the fact that the 78 superintendents on the average expressed a preference for substantially

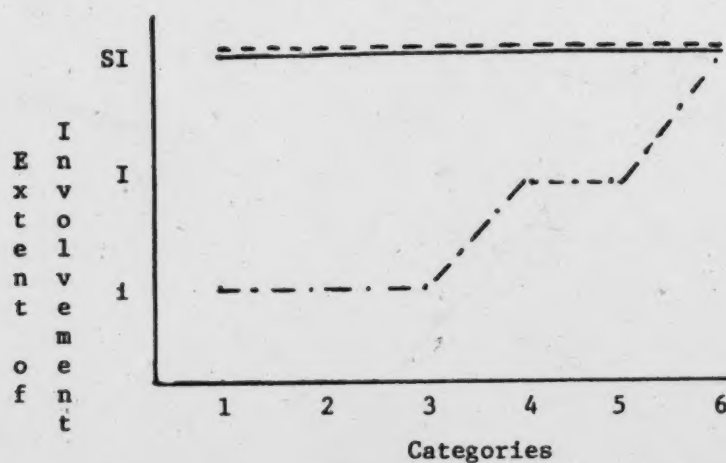


Figure 1

Extent of Involvement by Regional Offices of Education
in the Six Categories

Key ——— all superintendents (N = 78)

— . . . urban superintendents (N = 12)

- - - - rural superintendents (N = 66)

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level).

increased involvement by ROE in all six categories.

Urban superintendents indicated a preference for slightly increased involvement by ROE in categories 1, 2 and 3, a moderately increased involvement in categories 4 and 5 and a substantially increased involvement in category 6.

Rural superintendents follow the same pattern as outlined for the total group.

Discussion. Implications drawn from the data seem to suggest that all respondents would prefer greater involvement by ROE in almost all activities mentioned in the six tables. The fact that rural superintendents appear to desire a higher degree of increased involvement than urban superintendents may reflect a difference in the extent of use made of ROE by each group. Another possible source of difference may be in the different numbers of urban and rural superintendents. The smaller N for urban superintendents would require a greater difference between mean scores for actual and preferred involvement in order to achieve the same level of statistical significance.

SUMMARY

The purposes of this chapter were to attempt to determine the extent of the use made by superintendents of the ROE and to determine the perceptions of superintendents concerning the advantages and benefits of the services offered by ROE.

According to the data a majority of respondents who participated in the study had had some contact with ROE. There appeared to be very

little difference in the amount of contact between urban and rural superintendents.

All respondents seem to have made extensive use of ROE and they apparently were reasonably satisfied with the services they received. The expertise of ROE staff appears to have been the main advantage to superintendents who requested assistance from ROE personnel.

The disadvantages of seeking ROE assistance which were most frequently mentioned by rural superintendents were that there were not enough ROE staff or that Regional Offices themselves are too far away from their clientele. Urban superintendents in listing disadvantages reported that there was more help available to them within their own school systems and that ROE staff could not satisfy the demands of urban superintendents concerning problems peculiar to the urban jurisdiction.

Consultative assistance, especially in programming and the instructional area, was considered to be the greatest benefit of ROE activities by rural superintendents. Urban superintendents believed that the regulatory role of ROE was of greatest benefit to them.

All respondents preferred more involvement by ROE in almost all activities and services included in the six categories of the questionnaire.

Chapter 5

ACTUAL AND PREFERRED INVOLVEMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to determine the extent of use made of Regional Offices of Education by Alberta superintendents. The perceptions of superintendents concerning the specific advantages and overall benefits of the services offered by ROE were also reported in Chapter 4.

In the present chapter the perceptions of superintendents concerning the actual and preferred tasks of ROE are investigated according to selected situational variables. The variables chosen were: urban - rural, separate school - public school, and the six zones of the province. Preferences for ROE involvement and for Department of Education involvement in the same activities were also compared and are reported in this chapter.

Preferences of Urban and Rural Superintendents

The task areas where urban and rural superintendents' preferences differ concerning the extent of involvement by ROE were determined. Analyses of variance were computed on all 39 items within the six activities categories. Where the level of statistical significance of the differences reached the .05 or .01 levels this is shown in the tables.

Findings. For every one of the items where differences reached statistical significance as shown in Table 5.1, rural superintendents recorded a significantly greater preference for increased involvement by ROE than did urban superintendents. Rural superintendents also perceived significantly more actual involvement by ROE than did urban superintendents for Items four and thirteen.

For these two items rural superintendents reported a greater actual involvement and also a preference for a higher level of involvement by ROE than did urban superintendents.

There were no significant differences between the pairs of means for urban and rural superintendents in relation to the remaining 35 items.

Discussion. The fact that there are only four items from a total of thirty-nine where perceptions differ significantly indicates an extremely high level of agreement between urban and rural superintendents in relation to actual and preferred involvement by Alberta's Regional Offices of Education. It is noteworthy, however, that rural superintendents preferred more involvement by ROE in the task areas mentioned in Table 5.1 than did urban superintendents.

Preferences of Separate and Public School Superintendents

Findings. A perusal of Table 5.2 shows public school superintendents indicated a preference for slightly less involvement by ROE in Item 6, (category one) than did separate school superintendents. They also perceived moderately less actual involvement by ROE in

Table 5.1
Task Areas Where Urban and Rural Superintendents' Perceptions Differed

Item	Actual Involvement		Preferred Involvement		Degree of Involvement
	Superintendents		Superintendents		
	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	
<u>Category 1: Technical-Productive Activities</u>					
4. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children	3.82	3.36**	3.58	3.08	M* M
<u>Category 2: Support Activities</u>					
13. Providing consultative services to individual teachers	3.09	2.67	3.00	2.53	m m
<u>Category 3: Maintenance Activities</u>					
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff			2.92	2.45	m
<u>Category 4: Reward and Sanctioning Activities</u>					
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction			3.00	2.56	m

* Key - Preference for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task areas mentioned:

m = prefer or perceive slightly more involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);
M = prefer or perceive considerably more involvement (Beyond .01 level).

**Mean scores obtained from the following: 1 = Full responsibility of ROE; 2 = Shared responsibility of ROE and other organization(s); 3 = Advice and Consultation by ROE; 4 = No involvement by ROE.

Table 5.2
Task Areas Where Separate and Public School Superintendents' Perceptions Differed

	Actual Involvement		Preferred Involvement		Degree of Involvement
	Superintendents Separate Public School N = 11	Mean N = 67	Superintendents Separate Public School N = 11	Mean N = 67	
Category 1: Technical-Productive Activities					
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study			1.27	1.81	m*
Category 6: Adaptive Activities					
39. Engaging in long-range planning	2.50	3.31			M

* Key - Preference for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task areas mentioned:
m = prefer or perceive slightly more involvement (Significant beyond .05 level);
M = prefer or perceive considerably more involvement (Beyond .01 level).

**Mean scores obtained from the following: 1 = Full responsibility of ROE; 2 = Shared responsibility of ROE and other organization(s); 3 = Advice and Consultation by ROE; 4 = No involvement by ROE.

relation to Item 39, (category six) than did separate school superintendents.

There were no significant differences between separate and public school superintendents for any of the other items.

Discussion. The differences in the perceptions of separate and public school superintendents for ROE involvement were negligible. This seemed surprising considering there were 39 items given in the questionnaire where differences of opinion could occur. The data indicated a very high agreement between separate school superintendents and public school superintendents regarding ROE involvement in the 39 task areas outlined in the questionnaire. Only in Items 6 and 39 were any differences of opinion by respondents detected statistically.

Preferences of Superintendents According to Zones

Analyses of variance were also computed for responses from each of the six zones. Significant differences were found between pairs of zones for fifteen different items. These are shown in Table 5.3. Since zones two and three were served by the same Regional Office, they were combined for this analysis.

The letter 'P' has been used to denote a difference in mean scores for preferred involvement and the letter 'A' has been used to denote a difference in reported perceptions for actual involvement.

Findings. The results do not appear to present a pattern where any one zone may differ consistently from any other. Four of the fifteen items are from the category of "Reward and Sanctioning"

Table 5.3 (continued)

Item	Zones					Degree of Involvement
	1	2&3	4	5	6	
Category 6: Adaptive Activities						
32. Introducing new courses of study and curricula	A*	P*	A		P	M
33. Introducing new teaching methods	A			A*		M
	P*	P				M
		P*			P	M
34. Introducing new approaches to finance and business management	A*	A				M
36. Conducting surveys and educational studies		A*	A	A		M

* Zone indicating higher degree of involvement.

** Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = prefer (P) or perceive (A) substantially more involvement (Significant beyond .001 level);

M = prefer (P) or perceive (A) considerably more involvement (Beyond .01 level);

m = prefer (P) or perceive (A) slightly more involvement (Beyond .05 level).

N's: Zone 1 = 11; Zones 2 & 3 = 29; Zone 4 = 12; Zone 5 = 12; Zone 6 = 16.

activities and four are from the "Adaptive" category. Another three items are from the "Managerial" category. There are two items from the "Technical-Productive" category and two items from the "Support" category.

Discussion. The fact that there were only fifteen items in which significant differences between and among zones were reported demonstrates some degree of provincial consensus among the respondents in this study. At the same time, there was also some measure of difference in perceptions among the zones and this may indicate differing needs for service by ROE in some areas of the province of Alberta.

ACTUAL INVOLVEMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As an introduction to this section of the chapter a general overview of respondents' perceptions regarding the actual involvement of ROE and of the Department of Education is first given. Perceptions of actual involvement for twenty-nine task areas are provided.

Omitted for this and all further analyses in the study were the items concerning "Adaptive activities related to need for change and innovation" and all but two items of "Managerial activities related to coordination, control and direction within and among school districts, divisions and counties." These items were not included in the section of the questionnaire related to the Department of Education.

Table 5.4 was compiled by ranking mean scores for all of the remaining 29 items according to what respondents believed ROE and the

Table 5.4
Overall Ranking of Actual Activities and Services Provided by Alberta Regional Offices
of Education and the Central Department of Education

Item	Regional Offices of Education			Central Department of Education			Agreement between rankings by all Superintendents for ROE and DOE
	Superintendents			Superintendents			
	All N=78	Urban N=12	Rural N=66	All N=78	Urban N=12	Rural N=66	
<u>Technical-Productive Activities</u>							
1	8	6.5	8	1	1	3	H*
2	9	10	9	4	3	4	VH
3	7	10	7	5	5.5	5	VH
4	17	24.5	15	15	18.5	15	VH
5	18	21.5	16	13	21	13	VH
6	1	1	1	3	4	1	VH
7	27	29	27	28	26.5	28	VH
<u>Support Activities</u>							
8	25	24.5	25	2	2	2	L
9	16	14	18	8	8	9	H
10	13	18	12	10	7	10	VH
11	20	18	20	14	15.5	14	H
12	28	28	28	11	12	11	M
13	3	4.5	3	20	25	19	M
<u>Maintenance Activities</u>							
14	11	15.5	11	23	18.5	24	MH
15	5	3	6	18	11	21.5	MH
16	12	10	14	25	21	25	MH
17	19	15.5	19	24	23	23	VH
18	22	18	22	26	21	27	VH

Table 5.4 (continued)

Item	Regional Offices of Education			Central Department of Education			Agreement between rankings by all Superintendents for ROE and DOE
	Superintendents			Superintendents			
	All N=78	Urban N=12	Rural N=66	All N=78	Urban N=12	Rural N=66	
<u>Reward and Sanctioning Activities</u>							
19	6	6.5	5	17	17	17	MH
20	2	2	2	21	24	20	M
21	4	4.5	4	22	26.5	18	M
22	14	20	13	29	29	29	MH
23	26	24.5	26	16	15.5	16	M
24	10	13	10	19	13.5	21.5	M
25	24	24.5	24	9	9.5	8	MH
26	29	27	29	7	9.5	7	L
27	21	8	21	6	5.5	6	MH
<u>Managerial Activities</u>							
28	23	21.5	23	27	28	26	VH
29	15	12	17	12	13.5	12	VH

* Key based on agreement between rankings by all superintendents (N=78) for ROE and DOE as follows:

- VH = very high agreement, less than 6.0 points difference;
 H = high agreement, between 6.0 and 10.5 points difference;
 MH = medium high agreement, between 11.0 and 15.5 points difference;
 M = medium agreement, between 16.0 and 20.5 points difference;
 L = low agreement, 21.0 or more points difference.

Department of Education were doing (actual involvement). The closer the mean rating of an item was to 1.0 (Full responsibility of ROE or Full responsibility of the Department of Education), the higher the ranking that item received.

Mean scores for each item were computed from the following:

- 1 = Full responsibility of ROE (or the Department of Education);
- 2 = Shared responsibility of ROE and other organization(s) (or shared responsibility of the Department of Education and other organization(s));
- 3 = Advice and Consultation by ROE (or the Department of Education);
- 4 = No involvement by ROE (or the Department of Education).

Findings. Table 5.4 presents the individual rankings of the 29 items about which there was complete information. Rankings were computed from ratings by the 78 respondents concerning the importance of each item for ROE and the Department of Education.

The ratings for all 29 items were ranked separately for urban and rural superintendents as well as for the two groups combined. Separate rankings for the actual involvement of ROE and of the Department of Education in the 29 areas were computed. These resulted in the six rankings shown in the table.

A perusal of Table 5.4 indicates that the highest consistent agreement between all the respondents concerning the actual involvement of ROE and the Department of Education was in the "Technical-Productive" category. This fact was also true for the two items in the "Managerial" category. There was very high agreement between rankings for ROE involvement and the involvement of the Department of Education in almost all of the items in these two categories. For example, item

number 6 disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study" was perceived by all respondents as the most important activity of ROE and the same item was perceived by all respondents as the third most important activity of the Department of Education.

Discussion. The results in Table 5.4 provide a global view of respondents' opinions of the actual involvement of ROE and the Department of Education in each of the twenty-nine items. When all the categories are compared in the table it seems somewhat surprising that agreement between rankings by all respondents should be very high for almost all the items in only the "Technical-Productive" category and the "Managerial" category. Agreement between rankings for the other categories which are given in Table 5.4 is not as high when compared with the agreement between rankings in the "Technical-Productive" and the "Managerial" categories.

These results possibly mean that respondents considered the "Technical-Productive" activities which were given in the questionnaire and which were concerned with the instructional process within schools equally important activities for both ROE and the Department of Education involvement. The two items which were included in the "Managerial" category were also closely related to the instructional process. One item read "coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools" and the other item read "arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system."

Perceptions of Actual Involvement of Regional
Offices of Education and the Department
of Education in Five Activity
Categories

A second comparison of the ratings of ROE and the Department of Education "actual" involvement was made. Analyses of variance were computed on the scores and differences, where significant, were reported at the .05, .01 or .001 levels as appropriate.

A coding system similar to that developed for Chapter 4 was used in order that an indication of the direction of the perceived differences in involvement could be given. The system used for comparing the involvement of ROE and the Department of Education is as follows:

- SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education;
- M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education;
- m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education;
- n = perceive no change in involvement;
- l = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education;
- L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education;
- SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education.

Findings. Tables 5.5 to 5.9 inclusive, indicate a diversity of perceptions. The 78 respondents perceived substantially less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in thirteen of the twenty-nine activities. They perceived considerably less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in two items and in seven of the twenty-nine items respondents perceived no

Table 5.5

Actual Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Technical-Productive Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
1. Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within their region.	SL*	SL	SL
2. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	SL	SL	SL
3. Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	SL	SL	SL
4. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children	1	n	n
5. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children	1	L	L
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	n	SL	SL
7. Determining types of student assignments	n	n	n
Total score for Items 1 - 7	SL	SL	SL

* Key - Perceptions of extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
 M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 1 = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.6

Actual Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department of Education in Support Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12			Rural Supts. N = 66			All Supts. N = 78		
8. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties	SL*			SL			SL		
9. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance	L			SL			SL		
10. Providing programs and services for exceptional children	SL			SL			SL		
11. Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services.	n			1			1		
12. Providing adult education programs and classes	1			SL			SL		
13. Providing consultative services to individual teachers	n			SM			SM		
Total score for Items 8 - 13	SL			SL			SL		

* Key - Perceptions of extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
 M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 1 = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.7

Actual Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department of Education in Maintenance Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
14. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops	n*	m	n
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	n	SM	SM
16. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties	n	m	n
17. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff	n	n	n
18. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees	n	n	n
Total score for Items 14 - 18.	n	SM	1

* Key / Perceptions of extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task areas mentioned:

- SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
 M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 1 = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.8

Actual Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Reward and Sanctioning Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
19. Evaluating an entire school system	n*	M	M
20. Evaluating individual schools	m	SM	SM
21. Evaluating instructions programs in several schools (e.g. Jr. High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Jr. High Schools)	m	SM	SM
22. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff	n	SM	SM
23. Evaluating student achievement	n	SL	SL
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	n	M	M
25. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties	L	SL	SL
26. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school divisions and counties	SL	SL	SL
27. Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations	1	SL	SL
Total score for Items 19 - 27	1	SL	SL

* Key - Perceptions of extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department
of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level)

M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement;

1 = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.9

Actual Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department of Education in Activities Related to Coordination, Control and Direction

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
28. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools	n*	n	n
29. Arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system	n	SL	SL

* Key - Perceptions of extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = perceive substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
 M = perceive considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 m = perceive slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 l = perceive slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 L = perceive considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 SL = perceive substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

significant difference in involvement between ROE and the Department of Education.

Respondents perceived substantially or considerably more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in only seven of the 29 items.

The data also point out the fact that urban superintendents saw no difference in involvement by ROE and the Department of Education for fifteen items. Urban superintendents, however, perceived substantially less involvement by ROE than the Department of Education in six items and considerably or slightly less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in another six items. Urban superintendents also indicated that ROE was slightly more involved than the Department of Education in only two items.

Rural superintendents believed there was no difference in involvement by ROE and the Department of Education for five items. Rural superintendents also indicated that ROE was substantially less involved than the Department of Education in thirteen items and that ROE was considerably or slightly less involved than the Department of Education in another two items. According to rural superintendents ROE was substantially more involved than the Department of Education in six items, considerably more involved than the Department of Education in another item and slightly more involved than the Department of Education in two other items.

Discussion. The results given in Tables 5.5 to 5.9 inclusive, highlight the fact that respondents generally reported much less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in the activities

which were provided in the questionnaire. There were only seven items where respondents believed that ROE was more involved than the Department of Education in carrying out the specific activities which were outlined in the items in the questionnaire.

There were, however, seven items where respondents perceived no difference in the involvement of ROE and the Department of Education. This left fifteen items of the questionnaire where respondents noted that ROE was less involved than the Department of Education. It appeared, therefore, that respondents perceived less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in a considerable number of activities and services which were outlined in the questionnaire.

PREFERRED INVOLVEMENT OF REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As an introduction to this section of the chapter a general overview of respondents' preferences regarding the involvement of ROE and the Department of Education is given. Preferences for involvement in twenty-nine task areas are provided.

Findings. Table 5.10 presents a complete list of the twenty-nine items, about which there was complete information, and their individual rankings. Rankings were derived for this table using the same procedure as outlined in the previous section.

The data in Table 5.10 indicate a very high agreement between respondents concerning ROE involvement and the involvement of the Department of Education for the items in the "Managerial" category. Although there are only two items in the category this consistency is

Table 5.10
Overall Ranking of Preferred Activities and Services Which Alberta Regional Offices
of Education and the Central Department of Education Should Provide

Items	Regional Offices of Education			Central Department of Education			Agreement between rankings by all Superintendents for ROE and DOE
	All N=78	Superintendents		All N=78	Superintendents		
		Urban N=12	Rural N=66		Urban N=12	Rural N=66	
Technical-Productive Activities							
1	6	4.5	7.5	2	1.5	2	VH*
2	9	4.5	9	3	4	3	H
3	13.5	8.5	16	7	5.5	7	H
4	21	24.5	21	25	24	26	VH
5	16	20	14	18	18	19	H
6	1	1	1	1	1.5	1	VH
7	28	29	28	29	29	29	VH
Support Activities							
8	26	23	27	4	3	5	L
9	18	15	18	8	8	9	H
10	12	17.5	10	6	5.5	6	H
11	20	17.5	19	22	13	23	VH
12	24.5	24.5	25	11	14	11	MH
13	7	12	6	26	27.5	25	M
Maintenance Activities							
14	10	12	12	23	15.5	24	MH
15	5	10	5	15	10	16	H
16	11	15	11	19	18	20	H
17	15	15	15	13	21.5	12	VH
18	17	20	17	16	15.5	15	VH

Table 5.10 (continued)

Item	Regional Offices of Education			Central Department of Education			Agreement between rankings by all Superintendents for ROE and DOE
	All N=78	Superintendents		All N=78	Superintendents		
		Urban N=12	Rural N=66		Urban N=12	Rural N=66	
<u>Reward and Sanctioning Activities</u>							
19	4	4.5	4	12	10	14	H
20	3	2	3	24	21.5	22	L
21	2	4.5	2	20	25	17	M
22	13.5	20	13	27	27.5	27	MH
23	22	22	22	17	18	18	VH
24	8	12	7.5	21	21.5	21	MH
25	27	26.5	26	10	10	10	M
26	29	28	29	9	12	8	M
27	23	7	24	5	7	4	M
<u>Managerial Activities</u>							
28	24.5	26.5	23	28	26	28	VH
29	19	8.5	20	14	21.5	13	VH

* Key based on agreement between rankings by all superintendents (N=78) for ROE and DOE as follows:

- VH = very high agreement, less than 6.0 points difference;
 H = high agreement, between 6.0 and 10.5 points difference;
 MH = medium high agreement, between 11.0 and 15.5 points difference;
 M = medium agreement, between 16.0 and 20.5 points difference;
 L = low agreement, 21.0 or more points difference.

not as evident for items in other categories in the table as it was in Table 5.4. As with Table 5.4 which compared respondents perceptions of the actual involvement of ROE and the Department of Education, the agreement between respondents for preferred activities of ROE and the Department of Education is generally higher for items which were listed in the "Technical-Productive" category than for items which were listed in any other category in Table 5.10.

Discussion. The results in Table 5.10 provide a global view of respondents' opinions of the preferred involvement of ROE and the Department of Education in each of the twenty-nine items. The agreement between respondents for all items in the "Technical-Productive" category is generally higher than it is between respondents for all the items in other categories in Table 5.10. It may be considered after comparing the data in Table 5.4 and Table 5.10 that respondents do not actually perceive ROE involvement and the Department of Education involvement to be the same as they prefer the involvement for the activities provided in the questionnaire.

Preferred Involvement of Regional Offices
of Education and the Department of
Education in Five Activity
Categories

A second comparison of the ratings of ROE and the Department of Education "preferred" involvement was made. Data were analyzed by following the technique outlined in the preceding section regarding the actual involvement of ROE and the Department of Education.

Findings. An examination of Tables 5.11 to 5.15 inclusive, reveals that the 78 respondents indicated a preference for substantially

Table 5.11

Preferred Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Technical-Productive Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
1. Developing broad outlines of curricular for schools within their region	L*	SL	SL
2. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	1	SL	SL
3. Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	1	SL	SL
4. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children	1	n	n
5. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children	n	n	n
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	n	n	n
7. Determining types of student assignments	n	n	n
Total score for Items 1 - 7	1	SL	SL

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SM = prefer substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);

M = prefer considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

m = prefer slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement;

1 = prefer slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

L = prefer considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

SL = prefer substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.12

Preferred Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Support Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
8. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties	SL*	SL	SL
9. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance	1	SL	SL
10. Providing programs and services for exceptional children	SL	SL	SL
11. Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services	n	n	n
12. Providing adult education programs and classes	1	SL	SL
13. Providing consultative services to individual teachers	n	SM	SM
Total score for Items 8 - 13	L	SL	SL

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SM = prefer substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
M = prefer considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
m = prefer slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
n = prefer no change in involvement;
1 = prefer slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
L = prefer considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
SL = prefer substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.13

Preferred Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department of Education in Maintenance Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
14. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops.	n*	n	n
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	n	M	m
16. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties	n	n	n
17. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff	n	n	n
18. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees	n	n	n
Total score for Items 14 - 18	n	n	n

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

- SM = prefer substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
- M = prefer considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
- m = prefer slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
- n = prefer no change in involvement;
- l = prefer slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
- L = prefer considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
- SL = prefer substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.14

Preferred Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Reward and Sanctioning Activities

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
19. Evaluating an entire school system	n*	n	n
20. Evaluating individual schools	n	SM	SM
21. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools (e.g., Jr. High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Jr. High Schools)	m	SM	SM
22. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff	n	SM	SM
23. Evaluating student achievement	n	L	L
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	n	m	m
25. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties	l	SL	SL
26. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties	L	SL	SL
27. Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations	n	SL	SL
Total score for Items 19 - 27	n	L	L

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department
of Education in the task area mentioned:

SM = prefer substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);

M = prefer considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

m = prefer slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement;

l = prefer slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);

L = prefer considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);

SL = prefer substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

Table 5.15

Preferred Involvement by Regional Offices of Education and the Central Department
of Education in Activities Related to Coordination, Control and Direction

Item	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66	All Supts. N = 78
28. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools	n*	n	n
29. Arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system	n	L	L

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Regional Offices of Education and Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

- SM = prefer substantially more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Significant beyond .001 level);
 M = prefer considerably more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 m = prefer slightly more involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 l = prefer slightly less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .05 level);
 L = prefer considerably less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .01 level);
 SL = prefer substantially less involvement by ROE than by DOE (Beyond .001 level).

less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in ten items. Respondents also indicated a preference for considerably less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in one item and slightly less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in another item.

There was a preference indicated by respondents for substantially more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in four items and a preference indicated by respondents for slightly more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in two items.

For eleven of the total of 29 items respondents preferred no change in the involvement of ROE and the Department of Education in the activities concerned.

The data also show that urban superintendents indicated a preference for no change in the involvement of ROE and of the Department of Education for eighteen items. Urban superintendents indicated a preference for slightly more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education in only one item. For the remaining nine items in this particular analysis, urban superintendents indicated a preference for less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education.

Rural superintendents preferred no change in the involvement of ROE and of the Department of Education for ten items. There was a preference indicated by rural superintendents for more involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education for six items and a preference indicated by the same group for less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education for the remaining twelve items.

Discussion. It was reported in the previous discussion regarding the actual involvement of ROE and the Department of Education in the 29 activities which were analyzed that the respondents believed the Department of Education was more involved in a greater number of activities than was ROE. It appears from the data provided in Tables 5.11 to 5.15 inclusive, that respondents also preferred more involvement by the Department of Education than by ROE.

These results seem to indicate that the superintendents who participated in this study preferred the activities offered by the Department of Education over the activities offered by ROE. This was true for a majority of the activities although the respondents did indicate a preference for the services of ROE in some activities.

Suggestions for Further Task Areas

Respondents were invited to add any additional task areas where they believed ROE were, or should have been, involved. In those instances where more than one respondent provided the same suggestion, for any item in Table 5.16, a mean of the actual and preferred scores was calculated and recorded in the table. The range of possible scores for any one item is provided at the end of Table 5.16.

Findings. Table 5.16 gives the number of respondents per category and their perceptions regarding ROE involvement in the task areas listed. Five respondents mentioned "Support" activities, six mentioned "Maintenance" activities, three mentioned "Reward and Sanctioning" activities, five mentioned "Managerial" activities and ten respondents mentioned "Adaptive" activities.

Table 5.16
Actual and Preferred Involvement of Regional Offices of Education in Additional Task Areas.
(N = 78)

Item	Number of Respondents	Involvement*	
		Actual	Preferred
<u>Category 2: Support Activities</u>			
1. Financing new programs	1	1	1
2. Financing new facilities (e.g. buses, buildings, etc.)	1	1	1
3. Dispense grants to school boards	2	2	2
4. Create Regional I.M.C. (Instructional Media Centre)	1	4	2
<u>Category 3: Maintenance Activities</u>			
1. Conduct regional seminars, inservice courses, for school administrators and for superintendents	3	3	2
2. Assist in certification of teachers and other professional personnel	2	4	2
3. Interpreting new Department of Education regulations	1	3	2
<u>Category 4: Reward and Sanctioning Activities</u>			
1. Advocating school board role to the Department of Education	1	1	3
2. Monitoring relationships between teachers, principals and superintendents	1	4	3
3. Providing safeguards for fairplay and ethics in education	1	4	3
<u>Category 5: Managerial Activities</u>			
1. Assist school boards in needs assessment	1	4	2
2. Give assistance only when requested	3	3	3
3. Disseminate Department of Education information	1	1	1

Table 5.16 (continued)

Item	Number of Respondents	Involvement*	
		Actual	Preferred
<u>Category 6: Adaptive Activities</u>			
1. Supply information on new programs and special programs (e.g. driver training)	2	2	1
2. Consultation regarding establishing new programs	2	3	3
3. Consultation regarding administration of new programs	2	2	3
4. Resident Regional Office specialists in schools for specified periods of time to assist in planning	3	4	2
5. Initiate inservice activities in educational and administrative fields	1	5	4

* Key - Actual and preferred involvement of Regional Offices of Education:

- 1 = Full responsibility of ROE;
- 2 = Shared responsibility of ROE with other organization(s);
- 3 = Advice and consultation by ROE;
- 4 = No involvement by ROE;
- 5 = Don't know or undecided.

Discussion. It is noteworthy that the greatest number of respondents given in Table 5.16 are grouped in the "Adaptive" category area. Most of the responses in this category were concerned with change and innovation. There were also suggestions that ROE should become more involved in "Maintenance" and "Reward and Sanctioning" activities.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to compare the actual and preferred perceptions of superintendents concerning ROE activities. There was general agreement reported among urban and rural superintendents concerning the amount of ROE involvement in each of the 39 activities which were included in part 'B' of the questionnaire. Rural superintendents indicated a preference for more involvement by ROE in a very few activities. Urban superintendents showed no such preference.

A general consensus also prevailed for separate school and public school superintendents. Public school superintendents perceived less involvement by ROE in one item than did separate school superintendents. Public school superintendents also preferred less involvement by ROE in another item than did separate school superintendents.

There was not much difference noted for the service of ROE between zones. The differences that were observed, however, may have reflected the need for specific services to unique areas of the Province of Alberta.

Less actual involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education was perceived by the respondents for a considerable number of the 29 activities which were analyzed in this section of the study.

There was also a preference noted by respondents for less involvement by ROE than by the Department of Education for a majority of the same 29 activities.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

Contained in this chapter is a review of the study. This includes a statement of the problem investigated, an outline of the instrumentation which was used, a brief description of the sample, the findings and the major conclusions with attendant implications.

SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the functions of Regional Offices of Education as they relate to the execution of various tasks in the Province of Alberta. Particularly, the study attempted to determine superintendents' perceptions of the actual and preferred tasks performed by Regional Offices of Education.

Sub-problems which were investigated included an assessment of the extent of use made by superintendents of Regional Offices of Education in Alberta and an assessment of the perceptions of superintendents concerning the advantages of the services offered by these offices.

Instrumentation and Methodology

The questionnaire "A Study of the Activities and Services of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education" was designed specifically for the study. The questionnaire solicited respondents' general

opinions of Regional Offices of Education in Alberta and of the actual and preferred activities and services provided by these offices. Perceptions of the actual and preferred activities and services of the Central Department of Education were also checked.

Frequency and percentage frequency distributions as well as analyses of variance were used to present and analyze the data generated by the questionnaire.

The Population

In March 1974, the questionnaire was mailed to all school superintendents (N=87) working in the Province of Alberta. By May 24, 1974, a total of 80 superintendents had responded to the questionnaire of which 78 were usable.

Findings

Contact with ROE. All respondents indicated they had had some contact with ROE staff during the 1973-74 school year. Furthermore, they indicated that these contacts were usually initiated by the respondents themselves rather than by ROE staff.

Almost all respondents felt a need to contact ROE staff for assistance during the 1973-74 school year and this felt need was generally followed up by requests for assistance.

There were no significant differences in perceptions between urban and rural superintendents regarding the amount of contact they had experienced with ROE.

Respondents perceived consultative and regulatory functions to be the two major reasons for ROE staff to contact them.

Consultative functions were also the most requested services of ROE by respondents. The data indicated that rural superintendents contacted ROE more frequently than did urban superintendents and that rural superintendents were generally satisfied with the service they received. The most dissatisfaction with service expressed by respondents was in the area of program development and general information.

The majority of respondents claimed that ROE was an effective agency in helping them solve problems they faced.

Advantages of ROE. Most respondents saw advantages in using ROE services although a sizeable contingent (20%) did not. The major advantage perceived by respondents was in the expertise of ROE personnel which enabled them to provide assistance and information over a broad area.

Disadvantages of ROE. Some urban superintendents believed there may have been more expertise within the school systems and perceived disadvantages in seeking ROE services rather than services of personnel within school systems for this reason.

Some rural superintendents claimed that the greatest disadvantage in seeking ROE services was that there were not enough ROE staff. Other rural superintendents believed the ROE were too far away to contact.

Benefits of ROE. The greatest benefit of ROE to urban superintendents was the regulatory role which the ROE play. These perceptions of urban superintendents are interesting when they are

compared with the findings of Chapman (1972) who quotes Regional Office staff as believing the regulatory roles of "monitoring and control should go to superintendents and school boards with ROE staff assisting when requested." Chapman also found that ROE staff categorize consultation, evaluation, assistance in curriculum development and the monitoring function as the major objectives of ROE (Chapman, 1972).

Rural superintendents perceived the consultative functions of ROE to be the greatest benefit to them.

Preferences for ROE involvement. All respondents preferred more involvement by ROE in many of the activity areas outlined in the study. There were only four task areas where urban and rural superintendents differed in their preferences for ROE involvement and two task areas where separate and public school superintendents differed.

There was also negligible discrepancy among the regions in relation to the preferences of respondents.

Actual involvement of ROE. Respondents perceived more actual involvement by the Department of Education than ROE in the task areas mentioned in the study.

Preferred involvement of ROE. A majority of superintendents preferred more involvement by the Department of Education than ROE in many of the activities which were mentioned in the study. There were some activities, however, where respondents indicated a preference for no change in involvement by ROE and the Department of Education.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the main purposes of the study was to determine the amount of use made by superintendents of ROE and their reactions to the services provided by ROE. Analysis of the data revealed that all the respondents in the study have had some contact with ROE and the services they provide.

The reports from superintendents revealed that contact with ROE were initiated mainly by them rather than by ROE personnel. In fact a substantial majority of the respondents indicated that they felt reason to contact ROE personnel and as a result they generally requested assistance.

Although respondents perceived ROE in a regulatory role they recognized that the provision of consultative services was an important function of ROE. It was also the consultative services of ROE that were most requested by respondents. These findings are generally in agreement with those of Chapman (1972) who noted that the consultative function was seen as the most important service of ROE.

Rural superintendents reported that they contacted ROE more frequently than did urban superintendents. They also indicated that they requested consultative service more frequently than did urban superintendents. Urban superintendents claimed that the regulatory role of ROE was of the greatest benefit to them. It appears that all respondents were most satisfied when ROE personnel were engaged in activities which they preferred not to do.

The second major purpose of the study was to determine if there were any differences in the perceptions of superintendents concerning the actual and preferred task areas of ROE. These differences were investigated according to certain variables.

Further data analysis revealed that there was very little difference in perceptions between urban and rural superintendents, between separate and public school superintendents and among superintendents from the six zones within the Province in relation to the overall activities and services of ROE in the Province of Alberta.

Results indicated that perceptions of respondents did not differ from each other significantly on a consistent basis from zone to zone. There were individual task areas, however, where the perceptions of superintendents within one particular zone did differ from the perceptions of superintendents in another zone.

Although there were some differences in preferences for specific services from ROE by urban and rural superintendents, both groups concurred in their preferences for a general increased involvement by ROE in the task areas mentioned in the study. A similar situation prevailed for separate and public school superintendents.

When comparing ROE with the Central Department of Education respondents reported less involvement by ROE in the task areas mentioned in the study than by the Central Department of Education. Respondents also indicated a preference for more involvement by the Department of Education than by ROE in the activities mentioned in the study.

IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of implications arising from the study. The role of ROE needs to be determined and communicated much more effectively to clientele. Divergent expectations of ROE by respondents in this study demonstrate the need to specify the role of ROE and the services it is to provide. Alternatively, it is possible that regional differences in services should be provided. A certain amount of autonomy for ROE may be desirable in this regard.

The role of ROE in urban areas must also be clarified. It appears that the superintendents whose opinions were discussed in this study were unsure of the role of ROE in urban areas.

Implications for the number of staff in each ROE were also revealed in the study. If ROE are to continue operating as they have been in their attempts to provide expert consultative services to a sophisticated professional group they will need competent and numerous staff. However, if ROE are to function merely as monitoring agents for the Department of Education they may not require large numbers of personnel.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Since ROE had only been operational for approximately six years at the time of the study, they were still in a state of flux in Alberta.

In this respect the following suggestions are made for further research:

1. A study should be conducted regarding the effectiveness of ROE in their attempt to provide consultative and evaluative functions simultaneously.

2. There is a need to examine the possibility of providing different services for various regions of the Province of Alberta.

3. A study should be conducted to investigate the possibility of extending the services of ROE by including more personnel within each ROE and by providing each ROE with more resources.

4. An investigation should be carried out to explore the alternatives which may exist to major expansion of ROE services.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
BASIC DATA QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF THE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES
OF
ALBERTA'S REGIONAL OFFICES OF EDUCATION

The study is being conducted by the Department of Educational Administration, University of Alberta, at the request of the DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION of the Province and has the support of the ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, the ALBERTA SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION and the COUNCIL OF ALBERTA SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS.

This questionnaire will provide information about (1) present activities and services of Alberta's five Regional Offices of Education (located at Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, and Lethbridge), and (2) the expectations for these offices as perceived by key sectors of the educational community within the province.

Please give this questionnaire high priority. The information provided will serve as a major input for future planning by the Field Services Branch of the Department of Education.

Please complete all sections of the questionnaire: COMPLETE ANONYMITY OF RESPONDENTS IS ASSURED. The questionnaire is coded for follow-up purposes only, if this should be necessary. The findings of the survey will be reported in summary form so that individual responses will not be identified. Thank you for your cooperation.

E. Miklos
Chairman
Department of Educational Administration
The University of Alberta

V

PART A

1. Which of the following most nearly describes the position you hold in your school or school system this year? CHECK ONE.
1. ☐ Counsellor or psychologist working in or from the district, division or county office.
 2. ☐ Director, supervisor, coordinator or consultant working in or from the district, division or county office.
 3. ☐ Assistant or deputy superintendent
 4. ☐ Superintendent
 5. ☐ Secretary-treasurer or Superintendent of Business for a school district, division or county
 6. ☐ Regional Office Coordinator or Consultant
 7. ☐ Member of the Central Department of Education Staff
 8. ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

2. Within which Region of the Province does your jurisdiction lie?

1. ☐ Grande Prairie
2. ☐ Edmonton
3. ☐ Red Deer
4. ☐ Calgary
5. ☐ Lethbridge
6. ☐ Member of Central Department of Education Staff

REGIONAL OFFICE AND CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PERSONNEL PLEASE OMIT ITEMS 3 to 9 INCLUSIVE AND GO ON TO PART B on page 4

3. How many times during the 1973-1974 school year have you felt that you needed assistance which the Regional Office of Education in your area might have provided? CHECK ONE.

1. ☐ None
2. ☐ Once or twice
3. ☐ 3 to 5 times
4. ☐ 6 to 10 times
5. ☐ 11 to 20 times
6. ☐ Over 20 times

4. How many times have you personally had contact with Regional Office personnel during the 1973-1974 school year? CHECK ONE.

1. ☐ None
2. ☐ Once or twice
3. ☐ 3 to 5 times
4. ☐ 6 to 10 times
5. ☐ 11 to 20 times
6. ☐ Over 20 times

5. How many times was this contact initiated by the Regional Office rather than by you? CHECK ONE.

1. ☐ None
2. ☐ Once or twice
3. ☐ 3 to 5 times
4. ☐ 6 to 10 times
5. ☐ 11 to 20 times
6. ☐ Over 20 times

Indicate the purpose(s) of the contact(s) which was (were) initiated by the Regional Office staff. _____

6. How many times during the 1973-1974 school year have you attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office of Education or one of its staff members?

1. ☐ None
 2. ☐ Once or twice
 3. ☐ 3 to 5 times
 4. ☐ 6 to 10 times
 5. ☐ 11 to 20 times
 6. ☐ Over 20 times

If you have attempted to obtain assistance from a Regional Office, in what connection was this, and what was the result?

- (a) Why assistance sought: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- (b) Result: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

7. In general, have Regional Office services assisted you in the solution of problems you have faced during the 1973-1974 school year? CHECK ONE.

1. ☐ Yes
 2. ☐ Qualified Yes
 3. ☐ No
 4. ☐ Unable to comment

8. (a) Do you see any advantages in seeking the services of Regional Office staff rather than using central office staff employed by school districts, divisions or counties? CHECK ONE.

1. ☐ Yes
 2. ☐ No

- (b) If "Yes", what advantages? _____
- _____
- _____

- (c) If "No", what disadvantages? _____
- _____
- _____

9. What overall benefits do you feel have resulted from the work of the Regional Offices of Education in your district, division or county?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

PART B

REGIONAL OFFICES QUESTIONNAIRE
(to be completed by all respondents)

INSTRUCTIONS:

To answer each task item in Part B of the questionnaire:

- (a) Check one of the five boxes following the word ACTUAL to record your opinion on the extent to which Regional Offices of Education in Alberta ARE INVOLVED in the task area mentioned;

AND

- (b) Check one of the five boxes following the word PREFERRED to record your preference for the extent to which Regional Offices of Education in Alberta SHOULD BE INVOLVED in the task area.

USE THIS SCALE:

Check in Column 1

if you believe that the task area is (should be) ESSENTIALLY A REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITY.

Check in Column 2

if you believe that the task area is (should be) A COOPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITY of Regional Offices of Education and one or more other organizations (for example, Local School Districts, Divisions or Counties; teacher groups, etc.)

Check in Column 3

if you believe that Regional Offices of Education provide (should provide) only ADVICE AND CONSULTATION in relation to the task area.

Check in Column 4

if you believe that there is (should be) NO INVOLVEMENT in the task area by Regional Office of Education.

Check in Column 5

if you DON'T KNOW or are UNDECIDED about the extent to which Regional Offices of Education are (should be) involved in the task area.

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE INVOLVED (SHOULD BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
TECHNICAL-PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO INSTRUCTION						
10.	Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within their Region.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16.	Determining types of student assignments.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PROCURING RESOURCES AND DETERMINING HOW THESE ARE USED						
17.	Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.	Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.	Providing programs and services for exceptional children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20.	Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE INVOLVED (SHOULD BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
21. Providing adult education programs and classes.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Providing consultative services to individual teachers.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO STAFFING AND UPGRADING OF SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL						
23. <u>Identifying priorities</u> in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. <u>Conducting</u> inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to <u>central office instructional staff</u> of school districts, divisions or counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to <u>central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff.</u>	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. Carrying out inservice development activities for <u>board members</u> of school districts, divisions or county school committees.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
REWARD AND SANCTIONING ACTIVITIES						
28. Evaluating an entire school system.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. Evaluating individual schools.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE INVOLVED (SHOULD BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK ARE

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
30. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools (e.g., Junior High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Junior High Schools).	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Evaluating student achievement.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MANAGERIAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COORDINATION, CONTROL AND DIRECTION WITHIN AND AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS, DIVISIONS AND COUNTIES						
37. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
38. Arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
39. Informing the Department of Education of the Province regarding school district, division or county needs.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE INVOLVED (SHOULD BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

40. Collecting information from school districts, divisions and counties for transmission to the Department of Education.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
41. Supporting school district personnel and associated agencies like the ATA, ADAs, in all areas of administration related to education.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
42. Coordinating other provincial and local government services, for example, recreation, culture, and health.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please list here any other task areas in which Regional Offices of Education in Alberta ARE INVOLVED or SHOULD BE INVOLVED and indicate your preference for their involvement in each task area as you have done for the above questions.

43. _____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

44. _____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE INVOLVED (SHOULD BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK ARE

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
45.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
46.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
47.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
48.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
49.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
50	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART C

CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE
(to be completed by all respondents)

INSTRUCTIONS:

To answer each task item in Part C of the questionnaire:

- (a) Check one of the five boxes following the word ACTUAL to record your opinion on the extent to which the CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION in Alberta IS INVOLVED in the task area mentioned;

AND

- (b) Check one of the five boxes following the word PREFERRED to record your preference for the extent to which the CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION in Alberta SHOULD BE INVOLVED in the task area.

USE THIS SCALE:

Check in Column 1

if you believe that the task area is (should be) ESSENTIALLY A RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Check in Column 2

if you believe that the task area is (should be) a COOPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITY of the Central Office of the Department of Education and one or more other organizations (for example, Local School Districts, Divisions or Counties; teacher groups; trustee groups; etc.)

Check in Column 3

if you believe that the Central Office of the Department of Education provides (should provide) only ADVICE AND CONSULTATION in relation to the task area.

Check in Column 4

if you believe that there is (should be) NO INVOLVEMENT in the task area by the Central Department of Education.

Check in Column 5

if you DON'T KNOW or are UNDECIDED about the extent to which the Central Office of the Department of Education is (should be) involved in the task area.

EXTENT TO WHICH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS INVOLVED (SHOULD
BE INVOLVED IN THE TASK AREA)

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
TECHNICAL-PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO INSTRUCTION						
51. Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within the Province.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
52. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
53. Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
54. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
55. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
56. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
57. Determining types of student assignments.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PROCURING RESOURCES AND DETERMINING HOW THESE ARE USED						
58. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
59. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
60. Providing programs and services for exceptional children.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS INVOLVED (SHOULD
BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

		Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
		1	2	3	4	5
61. Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
62. Providing adult education programs and classes.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
63. Providing consultative services to individual teachers.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO STAFFING AND UPGRADING OF SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL						
64. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
65. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
66. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
67. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
68. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS INVOLVED (SHOULD
BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

REWARD AND SANCTIONING ACTIVITIES

69. Evaluating an entire school system.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
70. Evaluating individual schools.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
71. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools (e.g., Junior High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Junior High Schools).	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
72. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
73. Evaluating student achievement.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
74. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
75. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
76. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
77. Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations.	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXTENT TO WHICH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS INVOLVED (SHOULD
BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

MANAGERIAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COORDINATION,
CONTROL AND DIRECTION WITHIN AND AMONG SCHOOL
DISTRICTS, DIVISIONS AND COUNTIES

- | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 78. Coordinating instructional activities
for school systems and schools. | Actual | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Preferred | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 79. Arbitrating in disputes which arise
within a school system. | Actual | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Preferred | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Please list here any other task areas
in which the Central Office of the De-
partment of Education in Alberta IS
INVOLVED or SHOULD BE INVOLVED and
indicate your preference for its
involvement in each task area as you
have done for the above questions.

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 80. _____

_____ | Actual | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Preferred | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 81. _____

_____ | Actual | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Preferred | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 82. _____

_____ | Actual | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | Preferred | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

EXTENT TO WHICH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS INVOLVED (SHOULD
BE INVOLVED) IN THE TASK AREA

Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

83.	_____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
84.	_____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
85.	_____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
86.	_____	Actual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	_____	Preferred	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

ADDENDUM

We very much regret that, owing to a printing error, the following items were omitted from the questionnaire. Since they refer to an extremely important dimension of any educational system, we are anxious to have your responses to them.

Would you please answer them using the same method as you used for items 10 to 42 and enclose this sheet in the questionnaire booklet when making your return.

EXTENT TO WHICH REGIONAL OFFICES ARE
(SHOULD BE) INVOLVED IN TASK AREA

ADAPTIVE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO NEED FOR
CHANGE AND INNOVATION

Full Responsibility	Shared Responsibility	Advice and Consultation	No Involvement	Don't Know or Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

A. Introducing new courses of
study and curricula

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

B. Introducing new teaching
methods

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

C. Introducing new approaches to
finance and business manage-
ment

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

D. Determining the priorities for
educational research

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

E. Conducting surveys and educa-
tional studies

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

F. Engaging in long-range
planning

Actual

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Preferred

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

APPENDIX B
LETTER OF CONTACT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, CANADA
T6G 2E1

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to gather information on Alberta's Regional Offices of Education. The purpose of the study is given on the cover of the questionnaire. Copies of this questionnaire are being sent to teachers, principals and school trustees. A similar questionnaire is being sent to superintendents and secretary-treasurers, and to Regional Office and Department of Education personnel in the Province.

We would appreciate your giving this questionnaire your careful attention. A stamped, return addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Please return the completed questionnaire within two weeks, if possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Eugene W. Ratsoy
Professor, Department
of Educational
Administration

EWR/hb

APPENDIX C
FOLLOW-UP LETTER

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
EDMONTON, CANADA
T6G 2E1

The response to questionnaires concerning the study of activities and services of Alberta's Regional Offices of Education has been encouraging.

We have not, however, received your completed questionnaire and we consider it most important as part of our data. Could you please complete your questionnaire and post it to this department by May 24, 1974.

If you have misplaced your original questionnaire, please contact us and another questionnaire will be forwarded.

In the event that you have already posted your original questionnaire, please accept our sincere appreciation and ignore this letter.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Eugene W. Ratsoy
Eugene W. Ratsoy
Professor

EWR/hb

APPENDIX D**TOP TEN ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES OF THE
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Table D.1
Top Ten Activities and Services of the Central Department of Education

<u>Actual</u>		Item Activities Category to which Item Belongs	Wording of Item	<u>Preferred</u>	
Ranking by Supts.	Item No.			Ranking by Supts.	Agreement Between Actual and Preferred
1	1.	Technical Productive	Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within the Province	2	VH*
2	8.	Support	Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties	4	VH
3	6.	Technical Productive	Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	1	VH
4	2.	Technical Productive	Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	3	VH
5	3.	Technical Productive	Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	7	VH
6	27.	Reward and Sanctioning	Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Dept. of Education regulations	5	VH
7	26.	Reward and Sanctioning	Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties	9	VH

Table D.1 (continued)

<u>Actual</u>			Wording of Item	<u>Preferred</u>	
Ranking by Supts.	Item No.	Activities Category to which Item Belongs		Ranking by Supts.	Agreement Between Actual and Preferred
8	9.	Support	Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance	8	EH
9	25.	Reward and Sanctioning	Reviewing the budgets of school districts, and counties	10	VH
10	10.	Support	Providing programs and services for exceptional children	6	VH

* Key based on differences between rankings as follows:

- EH = extremely high agreement (no difference);
- VH = very high agreement (1 to 5 points difference);
- H = high agreement (6 to 10 points difference).

APPENDIX E

INVOLVEMENT BY THE CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
IN FIVE ACTIVITY CATEGORIES

Table E.1
Involvement by Central Department of Education in Technical-Productive Activities

Item	All Supts. N = 78	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66
1. Developing broad outlines of curricula for schools within their Region	D*	n	d
2. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations	d	n	d
3. Selecting textbooks, and other instructional materials	SD	n	SD
4. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with normal children	n	n	n
5. Determining specific instructional methods to be used with exceptional children	I	n	i
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study	n	i	n
7. Determining types of student assignments	n	n	n
Overall for Items 1 - 7	n	n	n

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement;

d = prefer slightly decreased involvement (.05 level);

D = prefer moderately decreased involvement (.01 level);

SD = prefer substantially decreased involvement (.001 level).

Table E.2
Involvement by Central Department of Education in Support Activities

Item	All Supts. N = 78	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66
	SD*	n	SD
8. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties			
9. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance	n	n	n
10. Providing programs and services for exceptional children	i	n	i
11. Providing student counselling and pupil assessment services	i	n	n
12. Providing adult education programs and classes	I	n	i
13. Providing consultative services to individual teachers	i	n	i
Overall for Items 8 - 13	n	n	n

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);
 I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);
 i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 d = prefer slightly decreased involvement (.05 level);
 D = prefer moderately decreased involvement (.01 level);
 SD = prefer substantially decreased involvement (.001 level).

Table E.3
Involvement by Central Department of Education in Maintenance Activities

Item	All Supts. N = 78	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66
14. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops	SI *	n	SI
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	SI	n	SI
16. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties	SI	n	SI
17. Carrying out evaluation, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff	SI	n	SI
18. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees	SI	n	SI
Overall for Items 14 - 18	SI	n	SI
	SI	1	SI

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central/Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);
 I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);
 i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement.

Table E.4
Involvement by Central Department of Education in Reward and Sanctioning Activities

Item	All Supts. N = 78	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66
19. Evaluating an entire school system	SI *	i	SI
20. Evaluating individual schools	SI	n	SI
21. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools (e.g. Jr. High Language Arts in 3 or 4 Jr. High Schools)	SI	n	SI
22. Evaluating individual teachers and other instructional staff	SI	i	SI
23. Evaluating student achievement	SI	n	SI
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	SI	n	SI
25. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties	D	n	D
26. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties	D	n	D
27. Implementing regulations concerning plebiscites, petitions, loans, special grants, and other Department of Education regulations	d	n	d
Overall for Items 19 - 27	SI	n	SI

* Key - preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);

I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);

i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level);

n = prefer no change in involvement;

d = prefer slightly decreased involvement (.05 level);

D = prefer moderately decreased involvement (.01 level);

SD = prefer substantially decreased involvement (.001 level).

Table E.5

Involvement by Central Department of Education in Activities
Related to Coordination, Control and Direction

Item	All Supts. N = 78	Urban Supts. N = 12	Rural Supts. N = 66
28. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools	SI *	i	SI
29. Arbitrating in disputes which arise within a school system	n	n	n

*Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (.001 level);
 I = prefer moderately increased involvement (.01 level);
 i = prefer slightly increased involvement (.05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement;
 d = prefer slightly decreased involvement (.05 level);
 D = prefer moderately decreased involvement (.01 level);
 SD = prefer substantially decreased involvement (.001 level).

APPENDIX F

EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT BY CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
IN THE FOUR ACTIVITY CATEGORIES

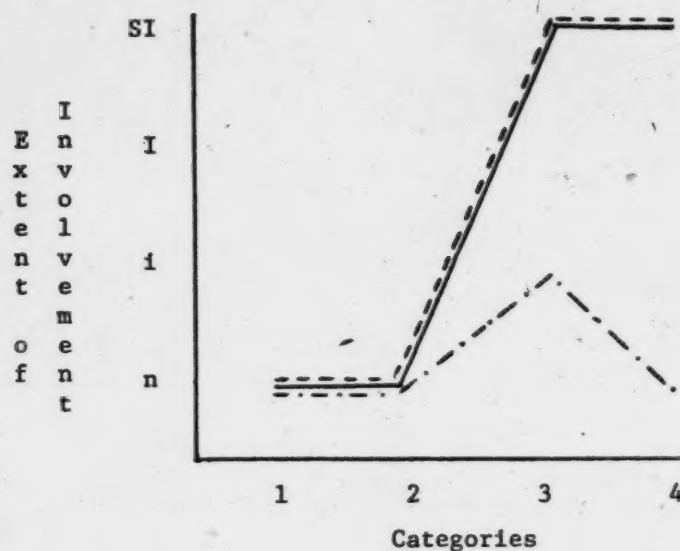


Figure F.1

Extent of Involvement by Central Department of Education
in the Four Categories

Key _____ all superintendents
 - - - - - urban superintendents
 - - - - - rural superintendents

SI = prefer substantially increased involvement (Significant beyond .001 level);
 I = prefer moderately increased involvement (Beyond .01 level);
 i = prefer slightly increased involvement (Beyond .05 level);
 n = prefer no change in involvement.

APPENDIX G

**TASK AREAS WHERE URBAN AND RURAL SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
DIFFERED FOR EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT BY
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Table G.1

Task Areas Where Urban and Rural Superintendents' Perceptions Differed
for Extent of Involvement by Central Department of Education

Item	<u>Actual Involvement</u>		<u>Preferred Involvement</u>		Degree of Involvement
	Superintendents		Superintendents		
	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	Urban N = 12	Rural N = 66	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	
<u>Category 3: Maintenance Activities</u>					
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff	2.92	3.45**			1*

Category 3: Maintenance Activities

* Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

1 = perceive slightly less involvement (Significant beyond .05 level).

**Mean scores obtained from the following:

- 1 = Full responsibility of Department of Education;
- 2 = Shared responsibility of Department of Education and other organization(s);
- 3 = Advice and Consultation by the Department of Education;
- 4 = No involvement by the Department of Education.

APPENDIX H

**TASK AREAS WHERE SEPARATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS DIFFERED
FOR EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT BY
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

Table H.1

Task Areas Where Separate and Public School Superintendents' Perceptions Differed
for Extent of Involvement by Central Department of Education

Item	Actual Involvement		Preferred Involvement		Degree of Involvement
	Superintendents		Superintendents		
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
	N = 12	N = 66	N = 12	N = 66	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	

Category A: Reward and Sanctioning

Activities

25. Reviewing the budgets of school districts, divisions and counties

3.09

2.32**

M*

* Key - Preference for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task area mentioned:

M = perceive considerably more involvement (Significant beyond .01 level).

**Mean scores obtained from the following:

- 1 = Full responsibility of Department of Education;
- 2 = Shared responsibility of Department of Education and other organization(s);
- 3 = Advice and Consultation by Department of Education;
- 4 = No involvement by Department of Education.

APPENDIX I

**TASK AREAS WHERE SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS FOR
EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT BY CENTRAL DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION DIFFERED, ACCORDING TO ZONES**



Table I.1
Task Areas Where Superintendents' Perceptions for Extent of Involvement
by Central Department of Education Differed, According to Zones
(N = 78)

Item	Zones					Degree of Involvement
	1	2&3	4	5	6	
<u>Category 1: Technical-Productive Activities</u>						
2. Developing curriculum guides for specific courses and specific student populations			A	A	A*	m**
6. Disseminating information on provincially approved curricula and courses of study		A*		A	A*	M
7. Determining types of student assignments		P*		P		m
<u>Category 2: Support Activities</u>						
8. Deciding what financial resources will be made available to school districts, divisions and counties	A*			A		m
9. Providing consultative assistance on the design and construction of school buildings and their operation and maintenance				A	A*	M
10. Providing programs and services for exceptional children			A	A	A*	m
		A			A*	m
					A*	M

Table I.1 (continued)

Item	Zones						Degree of Involvement
	1	2&3	4	5	6		
<u>Category 3: Maintenance Activities</u>							
14. Identifying priorities in relation to inservice and retraining of teachers and other professional staff and determining the programs for teacher workshops	P	P*	P	P*	P*	m**	
				A*	A	M	
				A*		M	
	A			P*		m	
		P		A*	A	M	
		A		A*		M	
15. Conducting inservice education and retraining programs for teachers and other professional staff				A*	A	m	
		P		P*		m	
16. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office instructional staff of school districts, divisions or counties			P			m	
						m	
17. Carrying out evaluative, inservice and consultative activities in relation to central office secretary-treasurers, accountants and other business staff	P	P	P	P*	P	m	
				A*	A	M	
	A*			A*		M	
			A	A*	A	M	
	A			A*		M	
		A		A*		m	
18. Carrying out inservice development activities for board members of school districts, divisions or county school committees			P	P*	P*	SM	
						M	
					P	M	

Table I.1 (continued)

Item	Zones					Degree of Involvement
	1	263	4	5	6	
<u>Category 4: Reward and Sanctioning Activities</u>						
19. Evaluating an entire school system				A*	A	M**
				P*	P	M
				P*	P	M
	P*				P	M
					P	M
20. Evaluating individual schools				A*	A	M
				P*	P	SM
		P*		A*	P	M
				A*	P	M
21. Evaluating instructional programs in several schools				P*	P	M
24. Motivating teachers and other professional staff to improve the quality of instruction	P	P	P	P*		M
		P		P*		M
				P*		M
26. Approving contracts, agreements and debentures of school districts, divisions and counties				A	A*	M
<u>Category 5: Managerial Activities</u>						
28. Coordinating instructional activities for school systems and schools	P		P	P*		M
				P*		M

Table I.1 (continued)

* Zone indicating actual or preferred increased involvement.

**Key - Preferences for extent of involvement by Central Department of Education in the task areas mentioned:

SM = prefer (P) or perceive (A) substantially more involvement (Significant beyond .001 level);
 m = prefer (P) or perceive (A) considerably more involvement (Beyond .01 level);
 m = prefer (P) or perceive (A) slightly more involvement (Beyond .05 level).

APPENDIX J

SUPERINTENDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ACTUAL AND PREFERRED
INVOLVEMENT OF THE CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
IN ADDITIONAL TASK AREAS

Table J.1
Superintendents' Perceptions of the Actual and Preferred Involvement
of the Central Department of Education in Additional Task Areas
(N = 78)

Item	Number of Respondents	Involvement*	
		Actual	Preferred
<u>Category 2: Support Activities</u>			
1. Financing new programs	1	4	1
2. Financing new facilities (e.g., buses, buildings, etc.)	1	1	3
3. Dispense grants to school boards	2	1	4
<u>Category 3: Maintenance Activities</u>			
1. Reinstate provincially appointed superintendents	2	4	1
<u>Category 6: Adaptive Activities</u>			
1. Supply information on new programs and special programs (e.g. driver training)	1	3	2
2. Monitor student achievement to establish Alberta norms	1	4	1

* Key - Actual and preferred involvement of the Central Department of Education:

- 1 = Full responsibility of the Department of Education;
- 2 = Shared responsibility of the Department of Education with other organization(s);
- 3 = Advice and consultation by the Department of Education;
- 4 = No involvement by the Department of Education;
- 5 = Don't Know or Undecided.